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REMARKS

ON THE

SERMONS

OF THE

Reverend Mr. SLOSS,

UPON THE

Doctrine of the TRINITY, &c.

In which

His main Scheme is examined by SCRIPTURE
and REASON.



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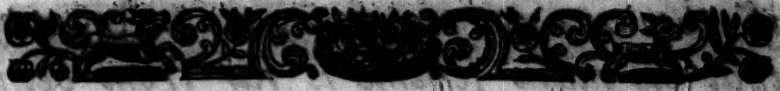
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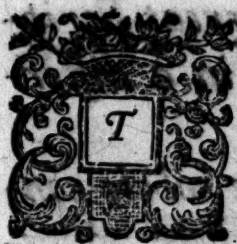
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ADVERTISEMENT.



THE following Remarks pretend to be little more than a collection from the writings of Dr. Clarke, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Emlyn, Mr. Pierce, and the Author of the Sober Appeal, &c. names which no party of Christians amongst us need, I think, to be ashamed of.

They are thus thrown together, to abate (if it may be) the confidence of Mr. Sloss and his friends; and to rebuke that intemperate zeal, that uncharitable anti-christian spirit, which breathes thro' his whole performance.

I call them Remarks, because I pretend not to consider every particular advanced by him; for that would have been almost endless.

I would only shew him, and his friends, if they are not too far gone in bigotry, that his main scheme is far from being proved either by Scripture, or Reason; and lead him, if possible, into more moderate and favourable sentiments towards those who are in another way of thinking; and explain the great Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity in a different method from himself.

These persons will find the whole controversy between them and their adversaries in a manner gone thro'; and the Author of the Remarks recommendeth his low attempt to their favourable acceptance and construction.

R E-



REMARKS

ON THE

SERMONS

OF THE

Reverend Mr. S L O S S.



BEFORE I proceed to make any observations on the Sermons themselves, I shall mention a few things, which are just ground of complaint against this author, and his performance.

ONE is, That altho' his main scheme is expressed in a set of phrases, in the sense of which the most eminent writers in this controversy disagree, and which the Scriptures are strangers to; yet he has the modesty to expect an implicit assent to them, and to represent those, who explain the important argument he is upon, in a different way from himself, as *sapping the very foundations of religion**;—as persons *whose reason is perverted, their understandings debauched, &c*†.

THERE is a great deal to this purpose scattered up and down his whole performance, which is little else but a low appeal to the prejudices and passions

of ignorant and furious zealots ; and seems principally designed to secure his credit with such.

He must not expect, that in all this the world should take his word ; but that the impartial and inquisitive will examine his explications and reasons, and try his spirit. A blind zeal, and too great a regard for modern systems and phrases, may keep this gentleman, and such as *he*, in countenance at present ; but the days of light and free enquiry are dawning amongst us more and more, and a fair and thorough examination of the present point in debate, may by degrees make them ashamed of their confidence.

ANOTHER thing complained of, is, this author's representing the doctrine of those whom he opposeth, as *Arianism*, and them as *Arians* ; tho' he seems not at all to understand what *Arianism* is, and they disclaim all regard to *Arius*, and hold none of his peculiar doctrines.

As they believe the doctrine of the *Ever-blessed Trinity* to be a doctrine of pure revelation, they take their opinions concerning it from the Word of God itself. They call no man master upon earth, and have no opinion concerning this important doctrine, which they cannot express in Scripture words, and which they are not willing to have tried and examined by that standard.

To fix a name therefore upon them which is odious, and perhaps because it is odious, and which they utterly disclaim, is injurious and abusive, and what they justly complain of. It would be easy to retaliate, and to represent this author either as a *Tritheist* or a *Sabellian* ; for he sometimes appears the one, and sometimes the other ; and one of them he must of necessity be. Men can never be fairly denominated from any person, till it can be shewn that they embrace his peculiar opinions ; and it will be time enough for this gentleman to brand *those* whom he opposes, with the odious name of *Arians*, when he under-

understands what *Arianism* is, and has proved that they hold the peculiar opinions of *Arius*. They appeal, in the mean time, from abusive names, to Scripture and Reason; are willing to compare *his* explication and *theirs* by those *two* rules, and stand or fall by them.

ANOTHER thing which they complain of, is, That he representeth many*, *who call themselves Protestants, as holding a prevailing error, big with all manner of errors, and opening a door to the greatest delusions*: Which error of theirs he represents in the words following; viz. " Let men believe what they will, provided they be sincere, and not conscious of the truth of the contrary of what they profess to believe, tho' what they believe should be never so contrary to what is revealed, either by a natural or supernatural revelation, yet they do not contract any guilt thereby."

THIS opinion the author represents in the blackest light, and loadeth with the most odious consequences. Now if he cannot name one serious writer, or refer us to one intelligent person, who holds any such opinion, without taking into the case a faithful enquiry and examination, and a sincere use of the best means within a man's reach to inform himself; I say, if he cannot do this, then what he hath here suggested, deserveth no other name than that of a downright calumny; and Mr. *Sloss* ought to ask pardon of God and man for such an injurious representation of his brethren. But when a person hath used the best means in his power for his own information, and should still happen to differ from Mr. S. in the explication of some important doctrines, let him tell us by what arguments he defendeth the Reformation from Popery, or his own Dissenting from a National Establishment, and I will undertake, that by the same arguments the persons whom he thus misrepresenteth, shall vindicate their practice, tho' their explication of

some important points should happen to differ from his ; *i. e.* they will vindicate it upon the foot of a right which they have to see and judge for themselves, after an impartial examination and enquiry.

THERE are other things in his preface, and with respect to his manner of conducting his argument in general, against which there lie very just exceptions ; but which, however, I shall industriously pass by. I proceed therefore to the Sermons themselves.

THIS author enters upon his argument and design with these words : “ The doctrine of the Trinity
“ (says he) is of that consequence in the Christian
“ scheme, and so closely connected with the most
“ essential and necessary principles of our holy reli-
“ gion, and they have all such an absolute depend-
“ ance upon it, that every attempt to destroy it, is
“ a home stroke at revealed religion, and sapping
“ the very foundations of Christianity, &c.* ”

NOW all this may with equal, or greater, justice be assumed by those whom he falsely and injuriously representeth as *Arians*. They are as firmly persuaded, as he can be, of the truth and importance of the Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity, and its direct concern with the essential parts of Christianity. But if he means all this of his own particular explication, (which he must do, if he speaketh consistently) this is the very thing to be examined and debated ; and, in that view, it is a shameful begging of the question at his first setting out.

THOSE whom he has invidiously represented as *Arians*, have produced the proofs of their explication, and laid them before the world once and again. It has been done by persons of as established reputation for close reasoning, and of as great integrity, and as true a concern for the interests of virtue and real goodness, as are to be found among those on the opposite side of the question. This may be said with great truth and justice, and without being deemed

an invidious comparison by impartial standers-by: I refer in all this to the men whose names I have already mentioned; and if such as these must be included in the number of *his enemies to religion, and adversaries to the truth*, (whom he speaks of in the next words) because they do not like that particular explication of the doctrine of the Trinity, which hath obtained (tho' unjustly) the name of *orthodox*, and have sufficiently shewn, how little foundation it hath either in Reason or Scripture; I say, if such men are to be numbered amongst the enemies of religion for this only reason, this, to be sure, is a vile unrighteous slander. And if what he says next, (*viz.* "*The more* IT*", meaning his own particular explication, and that of others in the same way, "*has been impugned, and denied by the adversaries of truth, so much the more zealously have the lovers of it stood up in its defence, &c.*" I say, if this) in his intention is applied to those, who have supported the scheme called *orthodox*, or *Athanasian*; — it is true, they have indeed stood up for it in many places, by condemning and hereticating their Christian brethren, by excluding them from Christian communion, where their power has reached so far; and shewing their good-will where it has not, by the odious and reproachful names wherewith they have branded them. *Ministers* they have endeavoured to render obnoxious to their people, and have set themselves to obstruct their usefulness among them: *private Christians* they have made uneasy, by stirring up their best friends and nearest relations against them†. — But still this way of talking, which our author useth, is weak and assuming, and I hope it will appear so, before I have finished these Remarks on his performance; not indeed to the conviction of *him*, and his *friends*, (that is, perhaps, too much to be

* Page 2. † *Vide Emlyn's Narrative, and Tomkins' Case, and that of the ejected Ministers at Exeter, and what has more lately happened in the case of Rawson at Nottingham.*

expected;) but to the conviction of impartial and unprejudiced men.

THOSE whom our author calleth *his* adversaries, and qualifyeth, at the same time, as *adversaries to the truth*, do believe, that the true Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity *will survive* (to use his own words) *the efforts of its enemies**, and maintain *its place as an essential article of faith*, as it hath done, upon the foot of Scripture and Reason, in the first ages of Christianity, till the times of darkness came on apace in the Christian world; and as it has again, in times of a more free and generous enquiry, had a remarkable revival, so they hope, that *it will continue to the end of time, wherever Christianity obtains in any tolerable measure of purity*: and they can heartily wish it may.

I HAVE made these Remarks upon his introduction, to shew how weak it is to use that language in respect of his own way of explaining the doctrine of the Trinity, which his adversaries can assume with greater truth and propriety than he. It will be my business, in what followeth, to make the comparison between the one explication and the other, and to shew which of them has the fairer claim to Scripture and Reason.

THIS author, in order to support what he has built upon the text which he has chosen, as the foundation of his several discourses, thinks it necessary, in the first place, *to evince its Canonical authority*†.

VERY good reason there was why this should be done; for the *dubiousness* (at least) of its authority has been so plainly shewn of late, that unless this author can offer something very material in this case, it will appear at last, that he has raised a towering superstructure upon a very sandy foundation.

BUT he cannot enter even upon this part of his task, without a spiteful and injurious reflection: "The opposers of this sacred and important doctrine (says

“ he) have assaulted it by various methods*; but
 “ their audacious and virulent malice against it, dis-
 “ covers itself in nothing more, than in vitiating and
 “ denying the authentic authority of those texts of
 “ Scripture, wherein this doctrine is most clearly and
 “ plainly contained.”

THIS abusive man is challenged to shew, what parts of sacred Scripture his adversaries have *vitiating*; and *where* and *when* they have *denied* the authority of any texts, in which the doctrine of the Trinity is plainly and clearly contained; except the authority of the text now before us, in which the doctrine of the Trinity is not at all contained, and which has been given up by several of his own party, as well as by his opposers. Such heavy and general charges should have been supported by some proper evidence, or else they must recoil upon the author of them.

As to the text in dispute, when he considers the names of those who have declared their doubts of the genuineness of it, and by the plainest facts and reasonings have at least shaken, if not overthrown, its credit; surely, if he has any modesty or good manners left, he will be ashamed of such abusive language: *names* which, I doubt not, will live, and be respected, when this author and his performance are forgotten. — I should scorn to use the man after this manner, if he had not treated his betters with so much virulence and contempt.

BUT after all, this gentleman has afforded us no new light; he has not directed us to one ancient and genuine *Greek* copy to remove our doubts. If he had, it should have been fairly considered. But he appears to be very defective in this kind of learning, and indeed in all true criticism; and as to the particulars which he has weakly insisted on, as they have been already answered by able hands, so to go thro' them now, would be to do that over again which has been effectually done already.

FOR the truth of what I say, I refer those who have curiosity and leisure, to *Mr. Emlyn's Enquiry into the original authority of that text*; and *his Answer to Mr. Martin's critical Dissertation*; and *his Reply to Mr. Martin's Examination of that Answer*; and also to *Dr. Clarke's Letter to Dr. Wells*; and *his Reply to Mr. Nelson's friend*.

WHEN the writings to which I have referred are consulted, and have been fairly considered, it will appear, that this author has reposed too great a confidence in a text, which is of doubtful, or no authority, and moreover has nothing in it to his purpose. So that, upon the whole, what *Mr. Platts* says in his letter*, (*Sept. 19. 1735.*) seems agreeable to truth, viz. "That this author has not been able to shew
 " that any of the antient versions ever translated it
 " in the first six hundred years, or that the *Latin*
 " fathers, who mentioned it, did it any otherwise
 " than as a mystical interpretation of what is now the
 " eighth verse, and therefore, to be sure, had not the
 " seventh in their copy; a verse, which he has not
 " been able to shew, that any of the antient commen-
 " tators, whether *Greek* or *Latin*, who wrote upon
 " this epistle, ever expounded; a verse, which the
 " present *Greek* Manuscripts unanimously disclaim,
 " as do also most of the antient *Latin* ones; a verse,
 " which the first printed *Greek* and *German* editions
 " left out, and the first *English* editions printed in a
 " different character, as a mark of suspicion; and,
 " lastly, a verse, which the editors of those *Greek*
 " copies which now have it in them, have not made
 " appear that they ever had any *Greek* Manuscripts
 " by them, which would justify such an addition."

BUT perhaps this author would not think well of it, if I should take no manner of notice of his marginal note in the last page of his book. "There is
 " another *Greek Manuscript*, says he, which hath

* This Letter (of which the following is an abstract) *Mr. Sloss* thought fit to suppress: for what reason, is best known to himself.

“ *this seventh verse in the body of the text, in the
“ King of Prussia’s library at Berlin.*”

THIS marginal note, he knows, was not in the original letter which he sent to Mr. *Platts*; and I could wish, for the sake of his own reputation, he had not added it afterwards. For if he would have been at the pains to have consulted Mr. *Emlyn’s Reply to Mr. Martin’s Examination*, he would have found that this Manuscript is a downright cheat; and an appeal to it must rather disserve his cause, than otherwise. He will excuse me therefore, if, for the sake of those who have not the book which I have just mentioned, to consult, I give here a passage or two out of the letter written by Mr. *La Croze*, the learned library-keeper of the King of *Prussia*, who, tho’ he was in the orthodox scheme, appears to be a man of great fairness and ingenuity of temper.

“ IT seems very strange to me, *says he*, that ever
“ our Manuscript, a book of no authority, should be
“ alledged in confirmation of a dubious reading,
“ since I have already discovered it to a great many
“ learned men, and even to the learned Mr. *Martin*
“ himself, that this Manuscript, tho’ much boasted of,
“ and sold by a cunning cheat for an antient book,
“ is but a late transcript from the *Polyglott* of the
“ *Complutensian* edition, &c. — Take therefore, in
“ short, for an answer to all your questions; He who
“ has seen the *Complutensian* copy, hath seen at the
“ same time our Manuscript, without excepting so
“ much as the errors of the printer, which the un-
“ skilful scribe hath so exactly copied, that it plainly
“ appears, that some learned knave had committed
“ the work to an illiterate man.

“ THE book indeed was sold for very antient, and
“ therefore at a huge price; and yet the parchment
“ is so new, that the very lime or chalk made use of
“ in dressing the calveskins is yet upon it; and was
“ there no other mark of fraud, the ink is enough
“ to discover it, which is every where whitish.

“ IT

" It is therefore to no purpose to appeal to this
 " copy. For my part I firmly hold the *Nicene* and
 " orthodox faith; but God forbid that I should ever
 " go about to defend it by fraud. However, in this
 " manuscript the seventh verse is in the text, in the
 " same manner as the sixth and eighth are; nor is
 " there any thing written in the margin."

I HAD gone thus far, when a learned person, whom
 I esteem as one of the first of my friends, commu-
 nicated another letter of the same Mr. *La Croze*,
 written in the year 1733, whereof, because it is
 not yet so commonly known here, I shall give the
 translation entire, and a note or two added by my
 friend.

" Most honoured and reverend Sir *,

" I AM surpris'd that my letter about the verse
 " of St. *John* has been heard of in *England*, for
 " I had taken no great pains in it; since I wrote it
 " off-hand, and at a time, when I was neither well
 " in mind, nor body. Indeed I sat down to it
 " (*ἐκὼν ἀκούσας σου*) with a kind of unwilling
 " consent; but could not refuse it to the impor-
 " tunities of a friend, and especially as I appre-
 " hended, that what I wrote would have gone no
 " farther. — I cannot oblige you with a copy of
 " that letter, for I seldom or never keep any copies
 " of my own letters by me; but I will tell you,
 " what I remember of the matter, and shall add
 " some other observations too, as they occur, which
 " I beg you will receive as a mark of my esteem
 " and friendship.

" I NEVER had any disposition to concern myself
 " in this dispute. — I knew, and had experienced, that
 " it was not safe to do it; since men of rash tempers

* The Latin letter is to be met with in a book lately pub-
 lished, viz. *Histoire d'un voyage littéraire fait en 1733. en*
France, en Angleterre, et en Hollande, &c. Seconde édition.
A la Haye, chez Adrien Moëtjens, 1736.

“ and undistinguishing heads, immediately call in
 “ question the Christianity of all such as pay not
 “ that respect which they require to their particular
 “ notions and opinions, how rashly soever enter-
 “ tained. — As to myself, I declare sincerely; —
 “ I am ready to hazard even my life in defence of
 “ that most certain doctrine of our Saviour’s Divi-
 “ nity, and other points deduced from it by our
 “ divines; but I never could think, that this
 “ doctrine, which many authorities of the New
 “ Testament do clearly demonstrate, can possibly
 “ be defended by doubtful and uncertain (I add
 “ also, *and false*) arguments, without the utmost
 “ danger to the truth itself. — But it will be proper
 “ now to come to a closer examination of the point
 “ in question.

“ THE following considerations have induced me
 “ to appear on that side of the question which I
 “ now espouse; namely, the silence of antient
 “ fathers, and ecclesiastical historians, and, what is,
 “ to be sure, of no little weight, the authority of
 “ antient versions. As for manuscript copies, I think
 “ nothing can be said from *them* in favour of the
 “ text; since the single *Greek* manuscript in our li-
 “ brary, to which the defenders of this text appeal,
 “ it is notorious, was transcribed by a late hand from
 “ the *Complutensian* edition; a fact, which I have
 “ frequently made appear to the conviction of tra-
 “ vellers, and our own citizens, and am yet ready to
 “ shew to any person whatsoever who shall desire it.
 “ There is not an error crept into the *Complutensian*
 “ edition by the carelessness of the printers, but what
 “ is faithfully copied in our Manuscript, even the
 “ very letters, in the shape of them, resemble the
 “ letters of that edition. I add further, the newness of
 “ the parchment, and also the ink, which was pur-
 “ posely made use of to look more antient, and de-
 “ ceive the unwary; so that to me it is evident be-
 “ yond all manner of doubt, that this manuscript was
 “ the

“ the work of some sordid wretch, to chouse the purchaser of a large sum, in which he succeeded to his wish;

“ Nor have I a better opinion of the *Dublin* manuscript, which, I am convinced is a very modern one, by the shape of the letters, as I have seen them copied in a certain journal, the name of which I cannot recal, nor have I the book by me. —

“ That manuscript has likewise, *Τῶς ἐσιν οἱ μαστουδοῦτες ἐν τῇ γῇ*, according to the *Greek* version of the *Lateran* council, where the words of the *Vulgate* are *in terra*. — But the *Greek* in that passage is plainly expressed in a *Latin* phrase, contrary to the usual phrase of the New Testament, which generally uses *ἐν τῇ γῇ*; for which reason I dare say those words have crept into the later *Greek* editions, from that version of the *Lateran* council.

“ I COULD say a great deal more in so copious an argument, but that I remember I am writing a letter, and not a dissertation. Wherefore, after a few things upon the authority and consent of the fathers, I shall come to the point of controversy between me and the learned *Bencelius*, who is now preparing an edition of the New Testament.

“ A MAIN argument in this case with me, was the silence of *Athanasius*, to whom this text would have been of such eminent service, had it actually been read in the copies of his time, but who never once appeals to it. Some have alledged, and particularly two divines of our own communion, at her Majesty's table, that neither can we produce any one passage in *Athanasius*, which has any reference to the form in baptism: But this pretence proceeds from a shameful ignorance, which here I have not room to expose; for that form so often occurs in *Athanasius*, that I cannot but wonder how it was possible for the objectors to overlook it. That I may not however seem to advance any thing without proof, I

“ will

“ will refer ’em to the places which I have met with
 “ in his genuine works. I make use of the late
 “ *Paris* edition. And the said baptismal form is
 “ quoted, *pag.* 237. B, and again, *pag.* 239. A B,
 “ and in his oration against the *Arians*, *pag.* 479.
 “ A B, and again in the second oration against the
 “ *Arians*, *pag.* 508. D F, and *pag.* 509. A B —
 “ These I believe are sufficient; otherwise I have
 “ marked ten more, which I forbear to mention. —
 “ I would not however impeach those Divines of any
 “ dishonesty, by whom objections of this kind are
 “ made; but surely their rashness and supine igno-
 “ rance is highly to be censured.

“ AND again, let but any one consider the com-
 “ mentary of *Oecumenius* upon St. *John’s* epistle,
 “ where there is the entire text of this epistle
 “ without this verse, which is accordingly not men-
 “ tioned in the commentary; and, if he be not
 “ greatly prejudiced indeed, he will be obliged,
 “ whether he will or no, to favour my notion.

“ THE learned *Mills*, tho’ for trifling reasons,
 “ he seems to adhere to the other side of the
 “ question, has however collected faithfully a great
 “ number of other arguments, in his observa-
 “ tions upon this epistle, against the authority of this
 “ verse. — In him let all such as have a mind to it
 “ seek for them. — Considering my ill state of
 “ health, and the weakness of my eyes, I have done
 “ more than could have been expected from me.

“ NOTHING remains now, but that I add a
 “ word or two concerning the *Armenian* version,
 “ which, in bishop *Uscan’s* editions, hath the verse
 “ in question. I should have thought he had inserted
 “ it from the *Vulgate*; since he confesseth in his
 “ preface, that he hath taken and inserted several
 “ other things from it: not indeed altering any thing
 “ in the *Armenian* text, but adding several things to
 “ it out of the *Latin* version; as every body must ob-
 “ serve, who compares the *Armenian* and *Latin* to-
 “ gether.

“ gether. But what has induced me to think other-
 “ wise, is the *Sisensan* council (p. 462. in *Galanus*,
 “ p. 461.) held A. C. 1307, in *Cilicia*, then called
 “ *Armenia minor*. The acts of that council have been
 “ faithfully copied by the same *Galanus* from the
 “ *Armenian* books; in whom, taken from the books
 “ of the councils and letters of that nation, we have
 “ the same testimony repeated, p. 436 and 478. Hence
 “ it is plain, that this verse, which is now inserted
 “ in the text of *St. John*, had crept into the *Arme-*
 “ *nian* codes before the beginning of the fourteenth
 “ century. I shall now examine *whence* and *how* it
 “ happened.

“ WE know for certain, that the *Armenian*
 “ kings, who in the thirteenth century made *Cilicia*
 “ their place of residence, came over to the com-
 “ munion of the Latin church, and united them-
 “ selves to it; acknowledging the bishop of *Rome* to
 “ be chief patriarch, and the head of their churches.
 “ The most noted of 'em was king *Hethum*, whom
 “ the Latin writers of that age, call *Haithon*. He,
 “ as his namesake and relation *Haithon*, the *Ar-*
 “ *menian*, in his oriental history, chap. 13. testifies,
 “ was king of *Armenia* forty five years, viz. from
 “ the year 1224, and died 1270, after he had,
 “ towards the latter end of his life, entered himself
 “ into the order of the Friars Minors, or *Franciscans*.
 “ He lived all along in strict union with the church
 “ of *Rome*, being also tolerably well skill'd, for that
 “ age, in the Latin tongue. He examined and cor-
 “ rected his *Armenian* bibles by the vulgar Latin,
 “ which he so religiously followed, that he translated
 “ even the prefaces of *St. Jerom*, and his *Prologus*
 “ *Galeatus**, into the *Armenian* language; and
 “ these prefaces are accordingly in the *Amsterdam*
 “ edition of *Uscan*, and in that of *Constantinople* 1705.
 “ — This edition therefore of *Haithon* occasioned

* The *Prologus Galeatus* is the Preface, wherein *Jerom* fixes the number of the Canonical books of the Old Testament.

“ the suppression of all the rest; so that if any person would have an accurate *Armenian* copy, he must travel into *Armenia* itself to search for those copies which are older than the thirteenth century. Now, whereas it is plain, the Latin copies of that age had this verse of St. *John's* epistle, it can be no wonder, if, being thence translated into all his codes by *Haitkon*, it is now to be found universally in all our *Armenian* editions.

“ I HAVE many things to add, but I grow weary, and am afraid I should tire you also with my talkativeness. — Farewel, and continue your friendship for,

S I R,

Berlin, Aug.
16. 1733.

Your affectionate, &c.

M. V. LA CROZE.

Mr. *La Croze* has the reputation of one of the first critics of the age; and, being library-keeper to the King of *Prussia*, we cannot suppose he has any prejudice against the reputation of any curiosity there; but yet he has been so candid as to expose the *gross cheat* which hath pass'd upon the world in respect of the fore-mentioned manuscript. This letter was communicated by Mr. *Achard*, a distinguished preacher at *Berlin*, to the author from whom it is quoted.

THE character of the writer of this letter is so well known through *Europe*, that I need not enlarge in his praise; his name itself is a sufficient *elogium*. The whole Protestant world greatly esteem him, and the most learned of the Papists regret the loss of him. He left *Paris* above forty years ago, when he was in high reputation, and might have made the most of his vast learning in secular preferments. His old friend there, M. *Montfaucon*, who is justly represented as every day poring on *Greek* manuscripts, and antient inscriptions, very much values his judgment.

ment. His *Coptic* Lexicon is so much the admiration of all that has seen it, that our * Dr. *Walkins* would be very glad to join with him in publishing one.

M. Dadicht, his Majesty's interpreter, reckon'd him the most learned man in *Europe*, among the eastern languages. In short, we cannot wonder, if, upon account of a whole life spent among books and manuscripts, all should allow him to be a perfect master. His not admitting this single text in *St. John*, cannot reasonably prejudice any Protestant against him; especially since his honesty and ingenuity of temper in this gives a greater weight to that noble defence of the antient writers, and in consequence of all the other parts of the sacred scriptures, against father *Hardouin*, I mean, his *Vindiciæ veterum Scriptorum*.

It is very well known, that artful society of Jesuits have made their advantage of the credulity of the orthodox, when they observed them to swallow every thing in a manner, without distinction, though it was no better than the mouldy bread of the Gibeonites. They have had the address to place all our antient records on the same precarious foot, that they might with the better grace reject them all at once. This was a bold stroke, and amazed all *Europe*; no wonder it should engage therefore the particular attention of this great man. When they sprang the mine to blow up the whole body of *Greek* and *Latin* fathers, he observed it was laid deeper, with a design to sap the foundation, not of the *Protestant Religion* only, but of *Revelation* itself. He observed it, I say, and by several plain facts he detected their grand view in thus laying violent hands on all antiquity, to be no less than a scheme to make christianity itself dependent on the church of *Rome*. They could then better plead for the antiquity of that church, when they had demolished the credit of all the antient records. But here Mr. *La Croze* hath

* One of the canons of *Canterbury*.

attack'd them in the most sensible part, and hath wholly destroyed their pretension to antiquity, in his *Histoire du Chriftianisme des Indes*, and the additions to it, (which last now waiteth on the Press in *Holland*.) For these discoveries the Jesuits will never forgive him; but one would think, they should bespeak a favourable attention to his judgment among Protestants.

THIS is the man, who with so much openness and integrity has attacked our author's favourite text, and grievously shaken the credit of it. Not an *obscure unknown* writer, but a man who holds the first rank for criticism and useful learning amongst the great men of *Europe*; who tells us too, *that he stands prepared to die for the truth of Christ's Divinity*; but who at the same time dares not, and would scorn to support *that*, or any other point, by false or doubtful arguments.

Mr. S. hinteth* at some other *Greek Manuscripts*, besides *that of Dublin*, which have this verse in the body of the text; but he is not so kind as to tell us where to find them. And I suppose, he will be cautious how he ventures them abroad, after what has now been laid before him and the World, as to the *Berlin Manuscript*, until he has retrieved the credit of that *imposture*.

AFTER this we may safely leave the gentleman in possession of his Manuscript, but it will be hard to say what service it will do his cause. But supposing the verse to be ever so genuine, the words ("These three are one") plainly mean one agreeing testimony, as I shall more fully prove hereafter. This was the opinion of the most considerable divines of the Reformation, both *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*†. I could

* See his last letter, p. 77.

† Beza says, "These three are one, i. e. they so entirely agree, as if they were but one witness; — I do not believe the unity of essence is spoken of in this place." He quotes also the *Glossa in Joannem*, and the *Complutensian* edition, to confirm his interpretation. See Beza in loc.

mention several of them, whose names and opinions may well be supposed to carry as much weight with them as this gentleman's. It is pretty remarkable too, that the learned Dr. *Waterland* in his vindication of *Christ's Divinity*, and the defence of it, has never once alledged, as I remember, this text in support of the cause which he has undertaken. We can hardly suppose it was thro' forgetfulness; or that he would not have produced it if he had thought it both genuine and decisive, as this author does. The doctor does indeed mention it in his *Importance*, &c. a book written a long time after; but he does not inform us what new light he has met with as to its genuineness and authority.

I CANNOT think it necessary to enter any farther into this part of the argument, or else the authors I have mentioned would render it an easy task. Whoever will consult them with candour, will see with how little truth or modesty Mr. S. triumphs in the beginning of his second sermon. "In a former discourse (says he) I have endeavoured to lay before you the evidence we have of the *authentick authority* of this text, and answered the objections which are made by those that oppose it. And I shewed largely how this text has been by the care of divine providence handed down to us from age to age as authentick scripture, without the *least proof* of its being spurious; so that we have all the *rational evidence* that the nature of the thing will bear, such as is sufficient to lay a foundation for our faith in it, as a part of the word of God."

STRANGE! *not the least proof of its being spurious? all the rational evidence? such as is sufficient to lay a foundation?*——But some people can build their faith on a foundation of *strubble*.

SOME will think it pity perhaps to disturb this happy gentleman in a possession wherein he seems to hug himself so mightily, tho' but in a dream.——Let us therefore see what use he makes of his text,
now

now he has made himself secure, as he thinks, in the possession of it.

THE doctrine which he builds upon it, is this ;
 “ (1.) * *That in the Divine Essence there are three*
 “ *persons, all on the same level of equality, in the same*
 “ *divine character, &c.* (2.) *That notwithstanding*
 “ *there is a Trinity of persons in the Divine nature,*
 “ *yet nevertheless the substance is by no means thereby*
 “ *multiplied, but continues still to be one.*”

HE first considers the distinction of persons in the Divine nature, and tells us, that *the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, are terms which in the Scripture denote three sacred Divine persons ; and in that they are said to be Three, this necessarily implies a distinction of persons in the Deity*†. And yet, when he comes to explain what he means by the word *persons*, he says, he does not mean *that they are persons strictly in that sense of the word as it is applied to men ; it includes in it, however, more than three names, and implies, that each possessing the Divine essence after his peculiar manner, thereby becomes a distinct person ; and that these three they call persons in a proper sense, &c.*

THUS he talks backwards and forwards : “ They
 “ are three persons, they are distinct persons ; per-
 “ sons in a proper sense, yet not strictly persons in
 “ the sense of the word *person*, as it is applied to
 “ men.” That is, they are persons, and they are not
 persons, and yet they are persons for all that.—
 What is it which every man, who either understands
 himself, or speaks to be understood by others, mean-
 eth by the word *person*, but a *distinct intelligent*
agent ? One who has a being, an understanding, a
 will, and a power of action proper to himself, and
 distinct from others.

THIS author himself, thro’ his whole performance,
 uses the word not as denoting *three names, attri-*
butes, modes, relations, or the like ; but three distinct

intelligent agents ; and in this particular matter there is not one exception in his book, whensoever he hath occasion to speak of the *Divine Three*.

WHEN he comes to the next part of his design, to explain *the unity**, he says, that these Three are *one being, one substance, one essence*. And again, having proved (as he says) *that there are Three, to whom the attributes and perfections of the Supreme God belong ; Three who are possessed of Supreme Deity*†; he says, the next thing is to shew, that *these are One, One numerically in their nature and essence*‡: Not One in a similar or like nature ‡; for it is a plain absurdity in philosophy, and contrary to the principles of natural reason, to say, that there are Three possessed of a like and similar Divine essence, which is not One in number ; this would be plainly to make three distinct Gods, each of which was like the other, but not the same infinite being or substance.

THIS is a fair and just account of his doctrine or notion of the *Trinity in Unity*: As far as I know, I have not mangled or misrepresented it. Now let us proceed to his proof, and see how he has acquitted himself in that part of his performance.

HE tells us**, *That we must regulate our sentiments, and draw our whole light concerning this matter from divine revelation ; and when carnal reason, reason falsely so called, thwarteth, and seemeth inconsistent with what is taught us concerning this doctrine in Scripture, in that case we ought to subject our blind, vitiated, corrupted reason, which indeed is not reason, but a pretence to it, to divine revelation*. — But why must *that* which is God's noblest gift bestowed on men, (as being *that* without which all his other gifts would be of no use to them) be thus abused with epithets? *That* which, in most cases at least, must be our measure and rule of judgment and of action? And certainly *that* by which we are to judge both of the proof and sense of a divine revela-

* Page 37. † Page 39. ‡ Page 130. ** Page 88.

tion itself? — The power of reason, to be sure, in creatures imperfect as we are, must be defective and limited, and may not be the measure and standard of all truth; but, for all that, in its proper sphere, the proper authority and use of it must be maintained. Without supposing it is able to comprehend every truth, we may, and must say, that in the last resort it is our only judge of that evidence, upon which we can receive, or ought to affirm, any thing as true. — But (if I may borrow a good maxim from a bad author*) “*When reason happens to be against a man, he will be against reason.*”

Mr. S. tells us, a little farther, that † *It is a piece of the most horrid arrogance, for any creature, even of the most perfect kind, to question truths delivered by GOD, on the score of their being incomprehensible to him, as to the manner how they are.* And thus he harangues for a great way together; insinuating at the same time some charges against his brethren, which they abhor. They rejoice in a divine revelation, and esteem it one of the greatest blessings to mankind; but they cannot admit *that* as a part of it, which, upon the most diligent and serious enquiry, they either cannot find in it, or find *directly* contradictory to it. And they are unwilling to have the interpretations and decisions of men, as fallible as themselves, palm'd upon them for the Word of GOD; and certain definitions, framed in dark and corrupt ages, for which they can see no foundation at all in divine revelation, imposed on them as sacred and divine truths. Here they stand upon their guard, and assert their liberty; but against whom? Not against a *really divine*, but against pretended, usurped authority: against those who set themselves in the place of GOD, and have assumed his prerogative. — To protest against whom, and oppose them too, we have a right both by nature and by the Gospel; and therefore if this author's definitions and decisions

* *Hobbs.*

† Page 89.

bring with them either no other or no better authority than his own, he must not expect that we shall receive them as sacred. If he should be found one of *those* who add inventions of their own to the Word of God, and father such things upon the Holy Spirit, as the clearest heads and most impartial hearts, after a due examination, cannot find in the holy Scriptures, he must have a care lest his own charge of arrogance revert upon himself. This is the very thing to be examined and tried; and we are now at leisure to attend him, in considering the proofs which he has brought of his own particular explications.

“LET us now see * (saith he) what evidence we have for this doctrine of the Trinity from Scripture-revelation in the books of the Old and New Testament; and let us be determined by that; form our sentiments wholly thereby; and receive with meekness and humility what the Great God himself delivers to us, as it becomes his creatures.”

AGREED, with all our hearts, (say we) and here we cheerfully join issue with him. But after all this parade and confidence, what does this gentleman put us off with? Does he turn us to any passage of Scripture where it is said in so many words, that the *Father, Son, and Spirit* are the *One God*, “*the same in substance, equal in power and glory*”; or, in our author’s more quaint expressions, that *in the same essence there are three divine persons, in the same level of equality, in the same divine character, &c?* Does he turn us to any place or places where this is expressly said? Or where it is represented of so much importance in Christianity, that it is necessary to be believed by every one, even by those of the meanest capacity, as an evident essential article? Does he open the Bible, and turn immediately to any such place? Nothing like it: He, and others in his way, tell us, their scheme and explication is the sense of Scripture, and fairly drawn from it by inferences,

* Page 91, 92.

reasonings, and argumentations, &c. Doubtless a doctrine may be truth, and well collected from Scripture, which is not found there in so many express words. But then such a doctrine, which must thus be sought for, and must require so much leisure and study, such natural and acquired qualifications to find it, cannot surely be of that high importance, as they represent their explication to be; surely it can never be bound upon all men, as an article of faith, plain and obvious to the meanest capacities. Can we believe a doctrine of such vast consequence can be left to be gathered from obscure hints, wide comparisons, doubtful reasonings, and precarious criticisms? Let those who can see the force and evidence of such criticisms and reasonings, receive the doctrine as true, if they see just cause; but let it not be forced upon others, who, after honest and serious enquiry, and proper application for divine light and direction, can see no ground for it. — Do they shew us where the Scriptures have laid so great a stress upon this explication of theirs, as to make it fundamental to christian communion, or essential to salvation? Do they tell us where in all the Bible such a representation of it is to be met with? Nothing like it again. If we tell them, that in the integrity of our heart we believe the Scriptures to be the rule of christian faith and practice, that this rule is sufficiently plain and clear; and that every one, who honestly endeavours it, may know whatsoever is necessary for faith or duty; and in acting according to such knowledge, he will be accepted of God: — If we tell them, again, that no Christian, or body of Christians met in synods or councils, have authority to explain this rule so as to bind their decisions upon the consciences of other men; but that every one is to believe and practise what he finds in this rule, or can fairly deduce from it, and not what other people tell him is there to be found, tho' he cannot himself perceive it with his own eyes: — If we tell them,

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again,

again, that this is the very foundation upon which Protestantism standeth, and upon which alone it can possibly be supported: — All this stands for nothing; and unless we receive their particular explication, we are heretics, *Arians*, and what not? This temper the author discovers more or less thro' his whole performance: Will he be able to justify it to an impartial by-stander, or to his own mind? But especially should it appear that the whole current of Scripture, particularly the New Testament, is against him? — And certainly there are some hundreds of texts directly contrary to his scheme, and utterly inconsistent with it, and which it is impossible to reconcile with it, but by a method of interpretation which destroys the use of all language, by taking away the only rule of knowing what meaning words are to convey, and whether they have any meaning at all or no. — We shall have several instances in the sequel, to exemplify what I say.

BUT let us now attend him in producing his own evidence from Scripture, and see how it will answer his purpose. He enters first upon his proof of a *plurality of persons in the Deity*; of *three divine persons subsisting in one essence, all in the same level of equality**: He tells us, *that in the Old Testament we have not so clear and express a discovery of this doctrine as in the New*; yet that the *Old Testament gives us hints of a plurality of persons in the Deity†*; and that this appears, among other places, from Gen. i. 26. — iii. 22. — xi. 7. &c. — Now supposing these places to speak of a plurality of persons, and not a mode of speaking to be made use of, which was common in all the oriental, as well as in our modern western languages, when a person of dignity speaketh of himself, and does it in the plural number; yet how will this prove his point? Are we not told of another person, who was with God, and was employed by him in making the worlds; or, Are we

* Page 92.

† Page 93.

not told, that *God made all things by Jesus Christ*? We do not suppose him addressing himself here to angels, but to his own Son. But how does this prove that this person, or these persons, here spoken to, are equal with the Father in all divine perfections and glory? The point of *equality* is the point which he is to prove by these texts: But is there one word in them to this purpose? If it be *God the Father* who speaketh in consultation with his Son and Spirit; why may not this be done, tho' they are derived from him, and subordinate to him? The Psalmist plainly ascribes the *commanding* part in the creation to the Father: "Let them praise the name of the Lord; for *he commanded*, and they were created;" *Psal.* cxlviii. 5. And if that belonged only to him, how do the places alledged, and the form of language used in them, prove *three persons in the Divine essence, all in the same level of equality, all in the same divine character*?

HIS other texts are less to his purpose still, if possible. He turns us to *Psal.* cx. 1. "*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.*" This, he says, our Saviour applies to himself, *Matth.* xxii. 44. — True: But how does this prove the *supreme* Godhead of *him* who is *thus* exalted by *another*? and when also it is *that other* who is to make his enemies his footstool *for him*?

ANOTHER text produced by him is so far from proving his point, that it overthrows his whole scheme, *viz.* *Psal.* xlv. 6, 7. This, he tells us, is such a description of the *Son*, the second person in the Trinity, as puts it beyond all doubt, that he is not only a *divine person*, and *truly God*, but *the One Supreme God with the Father*, tho' a distinct person from him*. — Let any man of common sense recur to the passage, and read it with attention; he will think it very strange, that such a text should prove,

* Page 97, 98.

or be cited to prove, *the Son* to be the *Supreme God*, which plainly speaks of *another person*, who is a God *unto* him and *above* him, who *raises* him to the dignity spoken of, and who *bestows a reward* upon him. "Therefore, says the Psalmist, God, *thy* God, hath anointed *thee* with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." — Does this agree to Supreme Deity?

THE same answer will serve also for another text, which he appeals to, *Psal. xcvi. 7. "Worship him, all ye Gods:"* Applied by the Apostle to Jesus Christ, *Heb. i. 6. "Let all the angels of God worship him."* — Is *he* the *supreme God*, who is worshipped by the *authority*, and at the *command*, of another? — As to what he says in respect of the *faith, hope, and trust*, which we are to repose in *him*†, how does *this* prove his point, or infer that Christ is the Supreme God? Surely the person *sent* and *qualified* by the *Father*, we may *hope* and *trust* in, for all the purposes for which the Father gave him to a guilty world; we may rely on him, as *able to save unto the uttermost all those who come unto God by him*; and as *one whom God has made unto us wisdom, righteousness, &c.* but without supposing him to be the Supreme God. — Most of the other passages of Scripture cited on this occasion, as well as what he offereth concerning the *third person*, will fall in our way hereafter.

LET us now go on to what he says of the *unity of God*, in his sixth Sermon*. Here he tells us, that *there can be but one God*, and that *this is clear from the principles of natural reason*; that *the very notion and idea of God is, that he is a Being of infinite unlimited perfections, and that there can be but one such, &c.* — That *there can be but one author of all things*; and that *as this truth may be known by the light of nature, so it is expressly and clearly revealed in Scripture, in many places both of the Old and New Testament.* — He refers to many places in the Old

Testament; *Deut. vi. 4.* "Hear, O *Israel*, the Lord
 "our God is one Lord." *Chap. xxxii. 29.* "Unto
 "thee it was shewn, that thou mightest know, that
 "the Lord he is God, there is none else besides him."—
 To the same purpose, *chap. xxxv. 4. Psal. lxxxvi. 10.*
Isa. xlv. 6. Chap. xlv. 5, &c.—These and many other
 texts he mentions from the Old Testament, and
 might have added many more.—But what is the *unity*
 spoken of in all these passages, but a *personal unity*?
 This *one* God, this *only true* God, is spoken of all
 along, as *one person*, and under the *personal* characters,
I, Thou, He. "There is none besides *Me*, &c."—
 Is there any the least hint, that this *one God* is more
 than *one person*, in one common numerical nature?
 Nothing like it.

He proceeds then to shew, from the New Testa-
 ment, the same doctrine of *the unity of the Divine Es-*
sence.—This, by the way, is no scripture language.—
 He quotes *Matt. xii. 31, 32.* "The first of all the
 "commandments, is, Hear, O *Israel*, the Lord our God
 "is *One Lord*; and there is but *One God*, and there
 "is none other *but He.*" He tells us again, that the
 apostle teaches the same doctrine, *1 Cor. viii. 4, 5, 6.*
 "There is none other God, *but one*; for tho' there be
 "that are called gods, whether in heaven, or in earth;
 "as there be gods many, and lords many; but to *us*
 "there is *one God.*"—Why did this gentleman stop
 here, and not read on to the end of the verse; he
 would have found *this One God* distinguished as the
one God and Father, not only from all other persons
 whatsoever, but in particular from the *Son.*—"But
 "unto *us* (*Christians*) there is but *One God*, the Fa-
 "ther, of *whom* are all things, and one Lord *Jesus*
 "Christ, by *whom* are all things, and we by him."—
 He mentions again, *1 Tim. ii. 5.* "There is *one God*;
 "and one mediator between God and man, the man
 "Christ *Jesus.*"—And *Ephes. iv. 4, 6.* "One Lord,
 "one faith, one baptism, *One God and Father of all*,
 "who is above all, and thro' all, and in you all."

AND

AND since the very pinch of the controversy, as to the *unity*, lies here, let me add a few more. *Matt. xix.* 17. "Why callest *Me* good? there is none good but *One* (*ἐἷς*, one person) that is, God." *John v.* 44. "And seek not the honour, that cometh from God *only*." In the original it is, "*from the only God*." *John xvii.* 3. *Jesus Christ* addressing himself to the Father says, "That they might know *Thee*, the only true God, and *Jesus Christ*, whom *thou* hast sent." *Rom. iii.* 30. "Seeing it is *one God*;" or, "seeing God, who shall justify, &c. is *but one*." (*ἑνὲς ἐστι ὁ θεὸς ὁς, &c.*) The Apostle is shewing that *one and the same person* is the God both of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*.—*Gal. iii.* 20. "(Ὁ θεὸς ἐστὶ ἕως)" But God is *one person*." And so *James ii.* 19. "Thou believest (*ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἐστὶ ἕως*) that God is *one* (*one person still*;) thou doest well".

Now let every one judge, who this *one God* is; even the *Father*; the *God* and *Father* of our Lord *Jesus Christ*. He is the *God* of *Israel*, the *God* of *Abraham*, besides whom there is no other; no *other person*, who is *God* absolutely, supremely, or in the same high and eminent sense. " * This is the sense of the term "*One God*, in all languages, ages, and nations, where the unity of God hath been professed; the common meaning of it in the lips of *Jews*, *Heathens*, and *Christians*." Let it be observed, that it is not said, *one God in essence or nature*, including a plurality of persons; but *one person*, that is, one intelligent agent; and there is no other *person* who is God in the same high and eminent sense of the word.—*No other person*, I say; the term *person*, being expressed, according to the nature of the *Greek* language, by the masculine *adjective* and *pronoun*.

THIS gentleman and his friends have been once and again challenged to shew, where, in all the scripture, God is spoken of as including a plurality of persons, or where he is not spoken of as one single person under the plain personal characters, *I*, *Thou*, *He*, and *Me*, &c. This is the constant language of the Old

and New Testament. It is every where *one person*, who is called *the God, the one God, the only God; God alone*, besides whom there is no other; the *only living and true God; the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*; and is in the New Testament more especially distinguished by eminent and peculiar titles, which no *person* or *being* whatsoever shareth with him. Nor is there so much as one single instance to the contrary from the beginning to the end of the bible; I say, *not one single instance*, where the term *One God*, can fairly be shewn to be used of any other *person* or *being* beside the *Father*, or together with him, or any way to include more persons than one.

WHAT notions the *Jews* had of this matter, in our Saviour's time, is evident beyond contradiction, from his discourses and their objections. Every debate which arises between him and them, wherein this argument is at all concerned, shews it. Indeed there is hardly a chapter in all the gospels in which this truth is not confess'd both in *his* language and *theirs*. The observation is too obvious to every attentive reader to need any mention of the particular places.

AND if we proceed farther to the *Acts of the Apostles*, we shall find the case to be still the same; and so it is likewise thro' all the epistles. The language and stile of the Apostles, even after they had received *the Promise of the Father*, that Spirit, *which was to lead them into all truth*, is not in the least altered in this particular: there is nothing about *absolute, abstract nature, essence or substance*, including more persons than one. There seems to be no great occasion after this to go any farther with this author: the whole controversy might fairly stand upon this foundation; but he would think, that he had not justice done him, if some notice was not taken of what he offereth to the contrary.

HE tells us, therefore, *That, according to the principles of the light of nature, and according to express Revelation, the divine essence and substance is but one:*

And therefore since the incommunicable names of the supreme God, and the works and actions peculiar to the supreme Deity, are applied to and affirmed of three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, these three must be this one supreme God, otherwise there must be three Gods; which is contrary both to scripture and reason.*—— There would be something in this, if the *unity of God*, that great principle both of natural and revealed religion, could not otherwise be secured and sufficiently explained, and was not expressly in scripture set forth, and founded in the *person of the Father, in the supreme dominion of the One God and Father of All, who is above all*; even above the Son and Spirit; who were *derived from him, sent by him*, and in all things act in subordination to his sovereign authority and will.

I AM afraid the method which he and his friends have taken to secure and explain the unity, will leave that great principle of all religion precarious and unproved, if not absolutely destroyed; for this gentleman cannot but know, if he knows any thing of this controversy, that it has been undeniably proved, that if there be three *equally supreme in the same level of equality* as he expresses (to pass the contradiction in the terms) there must be three *co-ordinate Gods*, and that whether united in one substance, or no. To *abstract nature, essence, deity, substance*, no actions, properties, &c. can in any propriety of language, or any intelligible sense, be applied, any more than to the word *man* or *mankind* in the abstract sense, nor can any regards be shewn, or applications made. And if this gentleman will maintain three distinct persons, to whom *personal* characters and *personal* actions can be applied, all *equal and supreme, on the same level of equality*, he does of necessity, and in just consequence, maintain *three supreme Gods*. He supposeth, in the whole course of this argument, each person to be an intelligent agent, capable of the distinctive personal characters, *I, Thou, He*: (Thus he speaketh all along;)

and that moreover these *three* are *equally supreme on the same level of equality*. — If so, how he can avoid the conclusion, that they are three *supreme co-ordinate* Gods, I cannot tell, and it concerneth him to shew; for no supposed union of *substance, nature, essence*, to which no actions or personal characters can in any intelligible sense or propriety of language be applied (*words* to which the sacred writings are utter strangers, and they who use them can affix no ideas, nor give any explanation; I say no such union, as this) can guard against the conclusion. Here let him review his argument, and try his skill, if he pleases; but I could wish he would first peruse with some attention the remarks of *Philaethes Cantabrigiensis* upon Dr. W—d's *Second Defence*, p. 30—35. and also a late defence of Mr. *Pierce's* queries, p. 10—25.

THE truth of the matter, as far as I can discern, is this; the word *God*, in scripture, does not signify the *nature, essence, or substance*, but the *dominion**, *authority* and *power* of the supreme Being. And when applied to *him*, it denotes *that active intelligent agent*. That *He*, who alone has in himself and of himself *absolute, supreme, independant* power and dominion over all, and is the *supreme Lord* and governor of the Universe. The author of the *Observations on Dr. W—d's Second Defence*, shews this in a very strong light; and that I may fix the matter once for all, and not return to it again, I shall transcribe a few more material passages out of him.

“ To suppose (says he) one or two more such persons, or *intelligent agents*, equally possessed of the same *supreme, absolute, natural, independant* authority and dominion over all, must of necessity make two or three *supreme* Gods. Nor would it make any alteration in the case to suppose them united in *es-*

* Perhaps it always denotes the use of a just and lawful authority with goodness and wisdom; and therefore a *God* is opposed to a *tyrant*, Psal. lii. 1. or to a person of *great* and *supreme* power, but *unjustly* possessed of it, or *arbitrarily* abusing it, or *both*. — In this sense the gods of the Heathen were no gods.

sence or substance :" The reason which he giveth, is this :— " As *person* is not a name of abstract intelligence, but necessarily supposeth *substance*; and yet it is the *life* and *intelligence* in that substance, which makes the *person* to be a *person*; so the word of God is not a name indeed of meer abstract *dominion*, but necessarily supposeth a living *substance*; that he, whose kingdom (original, undivided) ruleth over all. And it is supreme, independent *dominion* in that living substance, which maketh God to be God; to be *our God* in the highest sense, the *supreme God*, the *God of the Universe*, *God over all*. Indeed it is a contradiction in terms to suppose more than *one* (more than one person) thus absolutely supreme; since there can be no degrees, no communication of supremacy at all."—I will add only one word more from a fore-mentioned author, *Phil. Cantab.*

" NOTHING is plainer, says he, than that if the one God and Father of all is not alone supreme, he cannot be at all supreme; and, if two or three persons are supreme, equal in every thing," (*all on the same level of equality*, as Mr. *Slofs* saith) " it is evident, no one of them can be supreme in any thing. If this is not demonstration, there is no such thing in nature."

THUS, in our way of explication, the unity of God, that great and necessary principle both of natural and revealed religion, is truly secured, by the natural superiority of the *Father* in power, authority, and *dominion*, who is *alone*, in his *own person*, God absolutely, of *whom* are all things; the *one God* and *Father of all*; the *only living and true God* in the highest sense, *absolutely supreme* over all. *The Son*, tho' he deriveth his *being* and authority from the *Father*, may still be to us a *God* and *Lord*, and as having all power given him both in *heaven* and in *earth*, as being made head over all things, as having all things put under his feet; tho' he be excepted, who did put all things under him; and we are ready to acknowledge

knowledge him to be *Lord and Christ*, to the *glory of God the Father*. This is the constant uniform language of scripture, and all primitive antiquity.

As to scripture, this in part has been shewn already, by the texts, to which I have referred; and will yet farther appear by a particular examination of those texts which this author produceth for the contrary opinion.

As to primitive antiquity, that the foregoing account of the unity of God is every way agreeable to it, will easily be seen by those who will consult *Dr. Clark's Scripture Doctrine*, the *Collection of Queries*, the *Reply to Dr. Waterland's Defence*, the *Remarks of Philalethes Cantabrigiensis*, the *true Narrative in answer to Dr. Berryman's Historical Account*; as well as several other writings in this controversy. They will find this undeniably made out by the superior titles (*the one God, the true God, the only true God, God supreme over all*) universally ascribed to the God and Father of *Jesus Christ*. It is very true, the ancients do ascribe to the Son the title of God, but never (*ὁ ποιητὴς τῶν ὅλων, ὁ θεὸς τῶν ὅλων*) *the absolute Maker and God of the Universe*. And when they do ascribe the former, it is always understood by them with limitations, and with marks of his subjection to the Father. He is therefore *God*, and (*δημιουργὸς*) *Creator*, not absolutely, not primarily, or in the highest sense, but in subordination to his *God and Father*, and *in the power of his might*; only so, that all things were made (*δι' αὐτοῦ*) *thro' him*, in obedience and ministration to his *Father's Will*.

THEY argue again in the same uniform manner, that the Father is never represented as an angel, or as doing the will of another, or as having any other above him, and acknowledging any other person to be his *Lord and God*. Nay, they suppose that such a representation of the Father would even be blasphemy; whereas it is frequently made of the Son. But they speak of the Father, as being supreme and sovereign

vereign over all, and as issuing out his orders, and giving his commands; as sending the *word*, or his *Son*, in the character of his *angel* and *minister*, to execute his will and pleasure. Again, they never profess to worship the *Son*, as being the *one supreme God*; but found the worship of him on the sole appointment and good pleasure of the *Father*, consider it as *mediatorial* and *subordinate*, and contend, that only the *Father* is to be worshipped as *God supreme*, thro' the mediation of our *Lord Jesus Christ*.

THIS is the uniform language of primitive antiquity; and to this some of the most considerable among the Moderns agree: Such as Bishop *Pearson* in his *Apostles Creed*, and the learned *Dr. Cudworth*, who thus plainly declares his opinion; "That, according to the principles of christianity itself, there must of necessity be some *dependance*, and *subordination* of the persons of the Trinity in their relation to one another; because, that which is originally of itself, must needs have some superiority and preheminance over *that*, which deriveth its whole *Being* and *Godship* from it, as the second does from the first alone.—" Therefore (says he, speaking of the Son and Holy Ghost) "neither of these two latter is absolutely the cause of all things but only the *first*."—There is a great deal more to this purpose in his *Intellectual System*.

WE have some passages as full remarkable too in Bishop *Bull*. "They who contend (says he) that the Son can properly be stiled *of himself God*, (or God underived) "their opinion is contrary to the catholic doctrine." Again, "the council of *Nice* itself decreed, that the *Son* is only God *of* or *from* God. Now that which is only *God from God*, cannot, without a manifest contradiction, be said to be *of himself God*," (or God underived.) "And I earnestly exhort, says he, all pious and studious young men to take heed of such a spirit, from whence such things as this do proceed."

I WOULD not have mentioned these authorities, if this author had not, in his preface*, more than intimated that the fathers were with him, and that *they* who had vindicated the fathers in this point, had done a singular piece of service to the church of Christ; and among the rest he mentions Bishop Bull. But how far *he* and the authors now referred to are from being in this gentleman's way of explication, is very evident. They never talk of three persons *on the same level of equality*: They always suppose a superiority in the *Father*, and a subordination in the *Son* and *Spirit*. And if authorities and opinions were to turn the call, I leave any reader of common sense to judge, whether Mr. *Sloss*, or *they* are of most weight.

BUT after all, I do agree with him, that it is not so material what the opinions of the fathers were, as what the scriptures reveal concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity. And I am persuaded he will no more find his particular explication of it in the scriptures, than amongst the primitive fathers. Let us attend him a little farther in this part of his argument, and see how he succeeds.

AFTER he has laid down his doctrine, he proceeds to establish it from his own chosen text†; and having shewn a distinction of persons in the words, he goes on to explain the phrase, *these three are one*; not, *one witness* (he tells us) *but one being, one substance, one essence*, as the word in the original plainly imports, according to the idiom of the Greek language. For the word translated ONE is neither in the masculine nor feminine gender, but in the neuter; and signifies ONE THING, ONE BEING, ONE NATURE, and ESSENCE‡.

AND will this gentleman abide by his own criticism? I believe some of the most learned of those who espouse the text and his doctrine, would have been glad if the word he speaks of had not been of the neuter, but of the masculine gender.—Does he

* Pref. p. 21.

† Page 26.

‡ Pag. 37. 38.

not know that our Saviour prays, *John xvii. 11.* "Holy Father, keep thro' thy own name those that thou hast given me, that they may be *one, as we are.*" and *ver. 22.* "That they may be *one, even as we are one.*" Here the manner of expression in the *Greek* is the same as in his text. Does he think our Saviour prays, *that his disciples may be one being, one nature, one essence, and even one and the same essence with his Father and himself?* *ver. 21.* — *St. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 8.* says, "He that planteth, and he that watereth, *are one.*" Was *Apollos* and *St. Paul* *one being, one nature, one essence?* For the *Greek* is here also the same. — In another place the same Apostle speaks of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and says, "He (*Christ*) is our peace, who hath made *both one.*" Did *Christ* make both *Jews* and *Gentiles* *one being?* Or does not the Apostle rather mean, that he made them *one* in respect of spiritual privileges, there being no distinction between them under the Gospel? Other authorities might have been mentioned, but these are sufficient to expose this author's argument founded on the idiom of the *Greek language*, and to shew what a critic he is in the *Greek language* of the New Testament. — Why this arbitrary interpretation here in this place, which will not suit the phrase in any other?

BUT he goes on, "Nor is it the Apostle's meaning, that *they agree in one testimony.*" Why is it not? *Beza* thought so, and so have others of undoubted learning and orthodoxy. And this too is the very subject which the Apostle is upon, and agreeable to his design. Unity of *essence* or *being* is plainly not the subject matter of his discourse. He is proving that *Jesus* is the true *Messiah*, the expected Saviour of mankind. He says, *ver. 1.* "Whosoever believeth that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, is born of God, &c." He shews, *ver. 6.* that the testimony given of this at his *baptism*, at his *crucifixion*, and by the signs and wonders done by him, and by others

others in *his* name, are unexceptionable testimonies to the truth of his *mission*, and the authority of his *person*. He then proceeds, in the 7th and 8th *verses*, (on supposition that the 7th and part of the 8th are genuine) thus: "For there are *Three* that bear record in heaven, &c." *q. d.* In all controversies about human affairs, the positive testimonies of two or three credible witnesses are thought sufficient. The *Jews* allowed it by their law to be so. Wherefore the evidence *that Jesus is the Messiah*, is established beyond contradiction, according to their own notions and usage. Here are no less than *three witnesses* concurring in full demonstration of this truth. The Apostle goes on, *ver. 9.* "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater:" *i. e.* If two or three credible, tho' fallible, men are to be depended on, when concurring and clear in their evidence, how much more ought we to rely on the testimony of the infallible God?

I HAVE thus explained the text (on supposition that it is genuine) with the context, to shew that this is the argument which the Apostle is upon, and that it is a consent, or agreement of testimony, which he speaks of. This is the easy natural scope and design of the place. Why must we then fancy that he is here talking *metaphysics*, and speaking of (I know not what) unintelligible *unity of nature*, essence, and *substance*, which his subject hath no concern with. So little reason is there for this author to say, that the Apostle *does not, cannot* mean agreement of testimony, when it is evident he can mean nothing else. The reason which he offers in support of his own interpretation, is this; "The Apostle says, *they are one*; not *that they agree in one*." — But this falls to the ground, when he considers, (as he cannot but know) that the *Complutensian* edition, which first published this verse, readeth *in x̄d̄ in un*, after "*the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost*;" and wholly omitteth it after "*the Spirit, the Water,*

"*and the Blood.*" And *Erasmus* in his edition, upon the credit of what he calls the *Codex Britannicus*, also leaves out the phrase in the 8th verse. And the *Vulgate* in both verses reads, "*These three are one,*" without the least difference. How is our author's argument supported now, as grounded on the variation of the expression? I have hinted before, that several of the divines of the Reformation, both *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*, understood the place of a consent of testimony. Are not they of as much weight as this author? And if the Apostle speaketh (which he certainly does) of a consent of testimony, what becomes of all that superstructure which he has built upon so sandy a foundation? Surely it is enough to destroy his proof as to his own chosen text, supposing it were genuine. — But he proceeds to other passages of Scripture; and

THE next which he mentioneth in proof of a Trinity of persons, *on the same level of equality*, in the unity of the divine essence, is *the baptismal form**, *Matth. xxviii. 19.* His whole reasoning here proceeds upon this supposition, "That it is not fit, it cannot be, that Christians should be baptized into the name of the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, unless they are *one God in nature, essence, &c. in the same level of equality, in the same divine character.*" But where does he find this? And who told him so? I should call all this, which he offers for several pages together, an arbitrary interpretation and groundless reasoning, if I was not afraid of offending him. But, if he is not too eager in his pursuit, let him stand a moment, and hear what *his* great Lord and Master and *ours* saith, when he gave this commission to the Apostles: "All power is given to me both in heaven and in earth; Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c." Is this the language of supreme underived Deity? Can Mr. S. apply his *level of equality* here? And is

not this agreeable to our Blessed Lord's constant way of speaking? "*All things are delivered to me of my Father;*" Matth. xi. 27. "*The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands;*" John iii. 35. A hundred passages of the same nature might be added, to which he would find it very hard to apply *his level*.

As to the *Holy Spirit*, let him attend to the following passages. "I will pray the *Father*, and he *shall give* you another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, the *Holy Ghost*, whom the *Father will send* in my name;" John xiv. 16, 26. "Whom I will send unto you *from the Father*, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father: He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." — And how many more passages of this nature could I turn him to? Can these things be said of *one* who is possessed of *supreme* Deity? Here is no *human nature* to assist *him* and his friends at a pinch. The *Holy Ghost* cannot be considered as man and mediator. If the *baptismal form* be compared with these, and such Scriptures as these, it will be very far from proving the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* the same *One God*, in the same level of equality with the *Father*.

THE truth is, nothing like this is said thro' the whole bible in express terms, but must be fetched thence by dark and distant consequences, in contradiction to the whole tenour of it. And certainly, nothing like this can be the intention of the words in this form. The plain meaning of them is this; our Saviour commissioneth his disciples to enter persons by baptism into the christian religion, of which the great God and Father of all is the *supreme original author*, the *Son the publisher*, and the *Holy Ghost the great witness and confirmer*. And we can suppose and believe, according to the whole Scripture-representation, that *the Father*, the first cause, original,

and *spring* of man's redemption, can bestow all the benefits thereof on those to whom he has given his *Son*; and that *the Son* can perform all that lieth upon *him* as the redeemer of sinners, and the mediator between God and man; and that the *Holy Ghost* can apply the purchased redemption; without supposing *each* of these persons to be the *supreme God* in the same level of equality. Our Saviour's own account of this matter confirms all this. "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth, go ye therefore, &c." It is plain here *whose* the original authority is, and *from whom* it is derived. This is the plain scriptural account of the matter, and our author's reasoning here is fallacious, and his main point unproved. His representing it therefore as *absurd to the last degree* to reject his explication, and as an actual renouncing of our baptism, is mere rant; a mean application to the passions of ignorant persons, and unworthy of a sober answer. There is a great deal of the same kind in several other parts of his performance, which I pass by as below my notice. I intend only a sufficient confutation of his main hypothesis, and shall now follow him to another part of his design, which he enters upon at the beginning of his eighth sermon.

HERE he proposes to prove *the proper and supreme Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost, and their absolute equality with the Father, as to their nature and essence, and all their essential perfections; notwithstanding any inferior characters they may sustain with respect to the several parts these two persons may act in the execution of the method of grace**. He allows, that *the Son as mediator is in that respect the Father's servant, and in sustaining that character is inferior to him; and that the Holy Ghost in the oeconomy of the redemption, sustains the character of the Father's messenger, and the character of the comforter sent by the Son, and in that respect may be con-*

sidered as inferior to them; yet both these persons, with respect to their essential character, and with respect to what they are by nature, are absolutely equal with the Father, and the same degree of honour is due to them, as can be claimed by him, with whom jointly and inseparably they are the one supreme God.

Now this, whatsoever he would have other people think of it, is mere invention; a notion advanced in defiance of the plain constant language and sense of scripture. The distinction which he has made use of has no foundation at all there. To assist this gentleman's second and calmer thoughts, let me propose to him the following observations. What is the design of the whole scripture-history, but to give us an account (after God's forming this visible world, and particularly *man*, his reasonable creature) of the conduct of providence towards him? When he had rebelled against his God, and forfeited his favour, early intimations were given of a glorious scheme for his recovery. The appointed Saviour is kept in view thro' every age; the part which he was to act, and the redemption which he was to accomplish, is foretold, and was at length fulfilled in him with great exactness. But the great *God and Father* of all is constantly and invariably represented as the *original spring and mover*; and the part which the Son was to act, is represented as *delegated and committed* to him by the Father. We could have known nothing at all of such a scheme and method as this, but from revelation, and that has not said a word of the metaphysical nature, essence, or substance of the *Son and Spirit*, but only declares what part they act, in pursuance of the *grand scheme*, under the *God and Father* of all, and by authority and commission from him. This gentleman's distinctions therefore have certainly no foundation in Scripture, and he is wise above what is written. — An imputation often cast by this author and his friends, in peevish language, and

and with great injustice, upon their innocent brethren.—I will not retaliate.—To our great master we stand or fall.

BUT let me suggest another consideration to him, and ask, whether it is not contrary to the plain dictates of reason, and to the constant language of scripture; nay, whether it is not even blasphemy to suppose and assert of the one God and Father of all, who has all perfection, all power and dominion absolutely in and of himself, original, underyived, independent, that he either *does* or *can* act a ministerial part, mediate to another, and be sent by one to another as messenger and servant? And if it be, what becomes of this author's level of equality? How are the *Son* and *Spirit* absolutely equal with the Father? He allows them to sustain inferior characters; and, in respect of the Holy Ghost, he cannot (as I have hinted already) come off by an inferior human nature; yet the Holy Ghost is the messenger of the Father, nay, even sent by the *Son*, and received his revelation from *him*. Can they be equal then to the God and Father of all, who never in scripture-language sustaineth any such inferior character? Yes, he tells us, they are, as to their *nature* and *essence*; as to their *essential character* and *essential perfections*. Where does he find this? What language is it? Of the Scriptures? They, as I have hinted once and again, are strangers to it; they speak of it as essential for the *first person* to be *unbegotten*; and for the *second* and *third* to be *derived* or *originated* from him. This author's language confounds all religion both natural and revealed; but we know in what mint it was coined, and whence it was imported, thither let it return; it is high time to lay it aside. But I will offer no force to Mr. *Slofs*. Let him give other people leave to disuse it.

BESIDES, do the scriptures ever speak of God any otherwise than as a *person* (as I have said above) and

and under personal characters? Do they ever speak of our *Lord Jesus*, or of the *blessed Spirit*, in any other stile? Is there a syllable of their being united in one common *nature*, *essence*, or *substance*? Has this author himself any ideas here? Can he tell his meaning? and can he expect our assent till he does? Must we both believe he has a *meaning*, and that his *meaning* is the truth, when the scriptures *do not*, and he himself *cannot* declare it? And how is it, that he dares to abuse his brethren with opprobrious names, and takes upon him to exclude them from christian communion for withholding that assent? Does he know in all this, what spirit he is of? or that he is not fighting against God and his truth? For the wisdom from above is *peaceable* and *gentle*, as well as *pure*.

BUT he attempts to prove his point thus, by shewing, that *the Son and Spirit are the one true supreme God, equal with the Father, &c. since those names by which the supreme God is described to us in scripture, are ascribed to them; since all those attributes, perfections, and excellencies which are peculiar to the supreme God, are ascribed to them; since, again, all these perfections and excellencies manifest themselves really to be in them, and possessed by them, by the effects which they have produced; and, lastly, since that divine honour due to the supreme God alone, is claimed by them, and commanded to be paid to them**.

IF he proveth all this in the sense that his explication and *professed* design requireth, he does something. But if, on the contrary, according to the whole tenour of scripture, there is a *distinction* observed, observed with great care and exactness, as to the preheminance and superiority of the one, and the subordination and inferiority of the others; if this *distinction* is so constantly preserved, that no person of common sense, integrity, and faithful enquiry, can well mistake the matter, then all that he says

* Pag. 177, 178.

falls to the ground, and his main point remaineth still unproved on the foot of scripture.

He begins his proof of all this with respect to the *Son*; and first, as to the names peculiar to the *supreme God*, which are ascribed to *him**. He produces several instances. The first name which he mentioneth, is that of *Jehovah*, which he says, is *an incommunicable name, expressive of self-existence, and supreme Deity, never applied to a mere creature, were he of never so high a rank*†. Let him observe, that he has here changed the question. He either does or might know that those whom he opposeth, and whom he unjustly calleth *Arians*, do not call the *Son* a creature, as if he was one of the creatures which God made *by him*; consequently, the name *Jehovah* might be given him, according to their principles, tho' it were never ascribed to a mere creature.—But to pass that by.—They farther assert, that if the name *Jehovah* is ever ascribed to Christ (which they have not yet seen clearly proved) it is with an evident distinction between *him* and the *supreme God*. It is ascribed to him, as the angel and representative of the invisible God the Father; not acting or speaking in his own person, or in his own name, but in the name and person of the Father. Consequently, the titles, attributes and characters given of the person speaking or acting in such passages, are not given as the characters of the *Son*, but of the *Father*, who appeared *in him*, and *by him*; whose representative he was, and whom he personated.

THE scripture expressly declareth, that the Father himself in his own person did never appear as visible. Hence he is called by way of distinction the *invisible God*, Coloss. i. 15. And St. *John* asserts, that *no man hath seen God* (meaning the Father) *at any time*, John i. 18. and to the same purpose in his *Epist. ch. iv. 12.* and St. *Paul* describes him, *as dwelling in that light which no man can approach unto; whom no*

* Page 179.

† Page 196.

man

man hath seen or can see. These expressions intend no less, than that God the Father did never in his own person appear visibly to men; and that these visible appearances were of the *Logos*, who appeared however as the Father's representative, and *personated* him. This, to be sure, is the unanimous doctrine of antiquity; and it is also the opinion of several of the most considerable men among the Moderns, whether of the reputed orthodox, or others. And it is highly reasonable to explain these appearances so, because the person who assumes the character of *Jehovah*, is yet often represented as *an angel*, and *a messenger*, which cannot without great absurdity be applied to the *Supreme God*. Any rational and fair interpretation of such texts, which keepeth clear of this absurdity, should therefore certainly be embraced by any man of sense, who at the same time is concerned for the honour of Divine Revelation, and would have it stand clear of every seeming inconsistency. It would be too tedious to attend this author in all his instances, and shew how easy the matter is according to the method of explication which I have mentioned; but how much greater a difficulty, nay, even what absurdity lies upon his hands in his own way.

THE first instance mentioned by him is taken from *Isa. xl. 3.* "The voice of *him* that crieth in the wilderness, *Prepare ye the way of the LORD.*" The word he observeth, is *Jehovah*, and the passage spoken of Christ, since it is applied to him, *Matt. iii. 3.* Now is not this easily accounted for by the method of interpretation above? and by the customary language of Scripture in other places? This Messenger, *John the Baptist*, may very well be said to go before the face of God, as being sent before the face of *him* who is the *ambassador* of God; who sustained his *person*, was his *image*, and his *representative* in a more excellent manner than any prophet, angel, or person mentioned in the Old Testam-

ment ever was. If Christ thus in a more perfect manner represented his *Father*, the messenger sent before the face of *Christ* might very well be said to go before the *face of God*. Parallel places would have cleared this matter. In *Mark* i. 2. it is said, "Behold *I* send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare *thy* way before thee." Who is it now that says this to Christ? *Malachi* says plainly, that it is the *Lord of Hosts* who speaks these words to Christ, *Chap.* iii. 1. and Christ is in the same verse called the messenger of the covenant. Can this agree now to the *Supreme God*? Is he a messenger to another? It is the *Lord of Hosts*, who useth this language to *Christ*, and tells him he will send *his messenger* before him. The *I* who speaketh can be no other than the *God and Father of Christ*, who maketh this promise unto him. Let Mr. *Slofs* consider again, *John* i. 6, 7. "There was a man sent from God, whose name was *John*, the same came to bear witness of the light." Here again, God sent this messenger to bear witness of *him*, whom the Evangelist calls the *light of men*, ver. 4. i.e. that *divine person* by whom God was pleased to make a more perfect revelation of himself and his will to mankind. It is God still who sent *his messenger* before the face of *Christ*, upon his coming down from heaven as the light of men, more fully to reveal the *Father* to us.—Let him consult Dr. *Whitby* on *Matt.* iii. 3. who mentions the arguments above, and tho' at that time in the scheme of reputed orthodoxy, frankly confesses they must be fully refuted, before any man can prove from such texts, that Christ is *God, the same in essence with the God of Israel*.

THE same manner of interpretation, which is agreeable to the whole strain of the Old Testament, setteth aside his next instance*, from *Isa.* xlv. 21, &c. "Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the *Lord* (Jehovah?) and there is no God else besides

“ me, a just God, and a Saviour ; there is none be-
 “ sides me. Look unto me, all the ends of the
 “ earth, for I am God, and there is none else :
 “ Surely shall one say, in the *Lord Jehovah* have I
 “ righteousness and strength.—In the *Lord Jehovah*
 “ shall all the seed of *Israel* be justified.” One would
 naturally think there could be no difficulty in dis-
 cerning who it is that useth this language, and of
 whom these things are said. Could this author possi-
 bly mistake the person of whom the Prophet speak-
 eth, if he attended to the constant stile of the Pro-
 phet ? Who is it that *Isaiab* calleth every where *the*
Lord God, the God of Israel, &c ? If he will turn
 no farther backward than to the beginning of *chap. xlii.*
 he may see this made out beyond all contradiction,
 “ Behold my servant, whom I uphold ; mine elect,
 “ in whom my soul delighteth : I have put my spirit
 “ upon him ; he shall bring forth judgment to the
 “ *Gentiles* : — Thus saith the Lord, he that created
 “ the heavens, and stretcheth them out ; — I the Lord
 “ *Jehovah* have called *thee* in righteousness, and
 “ will hold *thine* hand, and keep *thee*, and give *thee*
 “ for a covenant of the people, for a light of the
 “ *Gentiles*. — I am the Lord *Jehovah*, that is my
 “ name, and I will not give my glory to another, &c.” —
 Is not here a *person* plainly distinguished from *Christ*,
 and calling him his *servant*, his *elect*, upon whom he
 will put his spirit, and by whom he will bring forth
 judgment or salvation to the *Gentiles* ? And does not
 this sufficiently explain the passage which he has pro-
 duced ? Can it be any other person who uses this lan-
 guage concerning *Christ*, than *God the Father*, whom
Christ in his debates with the *Jews* calleth *his*
Father and *his God*, and whom, he says, they called
 their God ? Can *Christ* be the *Jehovah* here, and
 use this language of himself ? And does not this ex-
 plain who is the *person* speaking in the same language
 in a parallel place ? The observations therefore, by
 which he would illustrate and confirm his point, will

not upon examination appear to have any weight in them, but rather to make against him. *It must be Christ*, he says, *that is spoken of, who is thus called JEHOVAH, and besides whom there is none else, &c.* Why so? *Because it is He to whom the ends of the earth are to look, and from whom the Gentiles are to seek salvation; and who was to be a light to the Gentiles; but has he never read of his being given by another to be a light to the Gentiles? Has he never read of God's saving us according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus?* 2 Tim. i. 9. Is not the Father said in many places to be *God our Saviour*, who saveth us by Jesus Christ? and whereas he saith, that Christ is here spoken of, because he is the righteousness of believers; has he never read, that *Christ is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption?* 1 Cor. i. 30. and that *we are made the righteousness of God in him?*—And it may not here be amiss to remember, that another Prophet says of *Jerusalem*, “This is the name whereby *she* shall be called, the *Lord* or *Jehovah*, our righteousness.” Jer. xxxiii. 16.—Again, whereas he says it must be Christ whom *Isaiah* speaks of, and that he must be the *Jehovah*, because the Prophet says, “to him every knee shall bow,” since this is applied to Christ, *Phil. ii. 10*. I was amazed that he should bring his text as his voucher, when it is added there, “That every tongue shall confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Does he thus prove Christ to be the *Supreme God*, to whom every knee is to bow by the command and authority of *another*? and whom every tongue is to confess to the glory of *another*?—He says again, that Christ must be the *Jehovah* or *Supreme God* in that passage, because in the New Testament we read, that he is *constituted the judge of the World*: “For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.” Does he consider what he saith? Is he the *Supreme God*, who is *constituted*

stituted or appointed judge by another? Or can the *Supreme God* be constituted to an office? Has he never met with this text; "The times of this ignorance God winked at, — because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by *that man* whom he hath ordained." — But this is the misfortune, when men will sit down to their Bibles encumbered with an hypothesis, which must be supported at any rate, whatsoever becomes of the reputation of Scripture, and how inconsistent soever it is represented by this means with itself. — "Like *Procrustes* in the fable, if a text is too short for them, they stretch it in their comments till it is long enough; but if they find it too long to suit them, they use just the contrary method in the citation of it."

HIS other instances are still less pertinent, if possible: He quotes *Isa. viii. 13.* "Sanctify the *Lord of Hosts*, and let him be your fear and your dread." This, he says, and the name *Jehovah*, must be understood of Christ, because in the next verse he is said to be a *stone of stumbling* and a *rock of offence* to *Israel*; and St. *Peter* applies these two expressions to our Saviour, *1 Pet. ii. 6.* He does so, but in such a manner as overthrows our author's whole scheme. The Apostle says, "It is contained in Scripture, Behold I lay in *Zion* a *corner-stone*, &c." Christ is the *corner-stone* by which the two parts of the building, the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, are united; but then he is *laid*, *appointed*, and *fixed* for this purpose by *another*, even by his God and Father, who is the *Lord of Hosts*, and says, "I lay in *Zion*, &c." Does he thus prove Christ to be *Jehovah*, the *self-existent supreme God*, by a text which distinguisheth Christ, the person *fixed* and *appointed* for an office, from the *self-existent supreme God*, by whom he was fixed and appointed?

THE rest of his proofs are answered in the same way, and therefore need not a particular consideration.

tion. What I have said, will fully shew the amount of his arguments upon the name *Jehovah*. It does not appear upon the whole, that any person besides the Father is called, in a strict and proper sense, *Jehovah* any where in Scripture: And the same Scripture which affirms *Jehovah* to be the *one God*, and the *one God* to be *Jehovah*, says also, that *Jehovah* is the *Father*, and the *Father* the *one God*. If it could, in this author's way, be shewn that Christ and the Spirit were the *Jehovah*, this would prove them *one person* with the *Father*, and establish mere *Sabellianism*, a doctrine which he pretends to disclaim. Nay, I cannot see but that, upon his principles, the same absurdity must be admitted in respect of *Jerusalem*, whenever the promise concerning it is accomplished, which I have mentioned above.

HE proceeds in the next discourse to the names of *Lord* and *God*, which, he says, are given to Christ *in such a sense, as they can only be given to the true God, the supreme God*. He allows, *They are given sometimes to the creatures in an improper and figurative sense; but the case is infinitely otherwise when the word GOD is applied to the Son; that there is no diminutive epithet added to him, whereby we are guarded from mistaking him for the supreme God.* — It is very strange that a man should assert this with so much assurance, which every person who can but read may discover to be otherwise. — His first instance he takes from *John i. 1.* “*The Word was with God, and the Word was God.*” He says, *The context is so far from insinuating any thing to detract from the proper Deity (his argument requires him to say, from the supreme Deity) of the Son, that there are other attributes added, which prove him undeniably to be the supreme God: For it is expressly said, that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* — I shall observe hereafter the plain distinction made in the original between the *Father*, of whom it is here said,

said, that he is *the God*, and the *Word*, of whom it is said, that he is *God*, or a *God*. I shall now take notice of the expression, *All things were made* (δι' αὐτοῦ) BY HIM, or THRO' HIM. And so far is it from proving that Christ, or the Word, was the *supreme God* and *Creator* of all things, that from the very nature of the language it proves directly the contrary. For to say, that all things were made (διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ) *by* or *thro'* the supreme God, is a downright solecism, as all who understand *Greek* must know, and as *Philo* the learned *Jew*, and *Origen* and *Eusebius* have observed. The phrase implies necessarily, that the person (δι' οὗ, *by* or *thro'* whom all things are made) is only the subordinate, ministerial, or instrumental agent in the work of creation, and the Father alone the original supreme creator, who created all things (διὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ,) *by* or *thro'* Christ, as the Scripture in several places explains itself; and this way of speaking it is almost impossible for any man to mistake who has any tolerable notion of the *Greek* language, and attends ever so little to the reason of the thing. Christ the Word then is not here, nor any where else in Scripture, called or supposed the absolute supreme Creator of all things, and therefore is never characterised with the title of *Creator*, but himself stiled the *first-born* of every creature, *Col. i. 15.* in the same sense as he is the *first-born* from the dead, *ver. 18.* Nor is Christ here so much as stiled *God*; for it is not said, *he is God*; it is only said, he existed in the beginning with God, and was God, as *God the supreme God's minister and representative agent*, both in the creation and in all the dispensations of the Divine will to mankind. So that, in truth, there is not a passage in all the Scripture more repugnant to this author's whole scheme, than what he has here alledged for it. What *St. John* plainly intimates is, that the Word, who under the old dispensation, and from the *beginning* of the world,

world, was the angel and representative of God*, and as such stiled *God*, is in the new or Gospel dispensation peculiarly characterised as the *only-begotten Son of God*, ver. 14. which is a higher and more divine title than was ever given to any of the angels, tho' they were called *Elohim, Gods*. — He describes the *Word* as a person who was with God in the beginning, and was concerned in all former dispensations, but of whom men had little or no apprehension before; they knew that God made the world, but that he made it by another glorious person, who was then with him, was in a great measure not apprehended. The *Jews*, perhaps, knew that God employed the ministration of an angel in the great and wonderful things relating to their dispensation; but that not any thing (which was done) of that nature was done without the *Word*, or the *Messiah*, was probably a mystery. To be sure, the Evangelist has said enough to give us a high notion of the dignity of this person; but he hardly could have taken more care to express his inferiority to the Father. For, besides what I have observed on the third verse, it is observable in the first, that in speaking of the Father he uses the article, and so denotes the absoluteness of his Godhead; ὁ λόγος ἦν μετὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, “*The Word was with the (supreme or only) God*. In speaking of the other person the article of distinction is omitted, whenever he calls him *God*, or a *Divine person*; καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος, “*And the Word was a Divine person, or a God*. And moreover, this very *Logos*, thus called *God* in the first verse, we find in the fourteenth called *the only-begotten of the Father*; which is a description of him, as having had his original from him. — Is he then the supreme God,

* It may not be amiss to observe by way of note, that in the same scale (not in the same degree) God himself tells *Moses*, that, as being *his representative*, he was to be a *God* both to *Pharaoh* and his brother *Aaron*, and *Aaron* was to be his prophet; *Exod.* iv. 16. and vii. 1.

who was thus derived from another? or is he the very same individual supreme God with *him*, whom he was with in the Beginning? Is he not plainly distinguished from him? He is called a God; but this title is often given without implying supreme Deity; and evidently so given to the *Logos* in this place.

He brings another instance, but as unhappily chosen as the last; "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Here, says he, *Christ is spoken of in such a sense as can only be assumed by HIM that is the supreme God* *. Let him read on, and then let him draw such a conclusion, if he can. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God (or O God, thy God) hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." *Psal. xlv. 6. Heb. i. 8.* What? are there no *diminutive* expressions here (as he phrases it) to detract from his supreme Deity? Can *he* be the *supreme God*, who has *one* to be a God unto him, and to bestow a reward upon him? Could any thing but a resolute attachment to an unreasonable hypothesis blind a man so far as this?

I apprehend it is needless to attend him thro' all his other instances, which are all of the same kind. The truth of the matter, as I have observed before, is this: The word *God* is plainly taken in indifferent senses in Scripture. "Tho' the Scripture calls magistrates *Gods* in one sense, and angels *Gods* in another sense, and Christ *God* in a third and higher sense different from both (as being that Lord or God, *by*, or *through* whom are all things) yet it is nevertheless most plainly and incontestably true, that in the highest and most absolute sense, there is but *one God*, as that signifies the *first cause*, of whom are all things; or *Him*, who alone has all perfections, and all dominion *in* and of himself, original, underived, independent on

“any. In this sense there is still but *one God*, even
 “the Father, of whom are all things; *one God* and
 “Father of all, who is *above all*, and *through all*,
 “and *in us all**.” In this way the unity of God is se-
 cured, which his scheme overthows; for two or three
 supreme persons, equally supreme in all perfections,
 dominion, power, and operation, must be two or
 three Gods, whether undivided in *metaphysical* es-
 sence or substance, or no. Does *metaphysical* essence
 or substance, abstracted from all consideration of un-
 derstanding, will, power and dominion, ever appear
 to be the scripture-notion of God †?

HE next proceeds to shew *the Son to be possessed of*
all those perfections which are peculiar to the Deity;
by which it is evident beyond contradiction, that he
is truly God, God in the highest sense, the supreme
God, and of one essence with the Father ‡. Now it
 would be sufficient to say in answer to this, that ac-
 cording to the constant strain of scripture-language,
 whatsoever the Son is, he is from the Father; and
 whatsoever excellencies and perfections he is pos-
 sessed of, they are from the Father. I do not know
 one text, which, taking in the context, and in fair
 construction, speaks of him in any other language.
 There is not any one instance (that I know of) in
 which the forementioned distinction is not carefully
 preserved. Can he then be the *supreme God* in the
 same sense?

BUT our author produces one or two texts, where-
 in he triumphs above his *own* usual manner. One is,
 Col. ii. 9, 10. “Beware, lest any man spoil you
 “thro’ philosophy and vain deceit, &c. for in him
 “(in Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead
 “bodily, and ye are complete in him, which is the
 “head of all principality and power, &c.” On this
 occasion he flourishes thus: *Here it is not said, that*
GOD dwells in him, but the GODHEAD; that it is

* Modest Plea contin. p. 9.

† Ibid, p. 101.

‡ Pag. 220, 222.

rendered more emphatical still, by saying, **THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD dwells in him:** and not only so, but **ALL the fulness of the godhead.** This, he says, is an expression so high and so emphatical, and holds forth the nature, essence, and substance of the supreme God in so strong a manner, that it is hard to conceive how the divine nature of Christ could be evidenced to mortals in language more significant*.

AFTER a fair examination of this text, we shall not find any reason for so high a transport. We shall find in the first place, that the word *θεός* never signifies the divine essence or substance. Whenever that is spoken of, *τὸ θεῖον* is the term, *Acts xvii. 29.* "We ought not to think *the Godhead* (*τὸ θεῖον*) *the Divine Essence*, like unto gold or silver, &c." In the next place, if in his sense, *all the fulness of the Godhead*, that is, *all the divine essence, nature and substance*, dwell in Christ, what has he reserved for the God and Father of Christ? — But to pass on. It is plain, that St. Paul speaketh of a fulness, which Christians might be filled with, as well as Christ. This does not appear so well in our translation, but this author does or *should* know what appears in the original. It should have been rendered, "and ye have been filled by him?" *καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῷ πληρωμένοι.* Filled? with what? With the fulness of the Godhead, to be sure: But what, in this author's sense, with all the fulness of the divine essence? with all the perfections of the Deity? — It plainly means therefore a fulness or plenty of heavenly gifts, or knowledge, communicated from God to Christ, to be by Christ imparted to christians, in order that they also might be filled in their proper measure. And this is agreeable to the language of Scripture in other places, *Eph. iii. 9.* "That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." — Let Mr. S. compare the two expressions, they are nearly alike in form, and are, I believe, exactly so in sense. —

* Page 223.

I hope he will not argue here, that this holds forth our being filled with the divine essence: Some *Enthusiasts* have talked something like it.—Again, it is said elsewhere, “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, has put all things under Christ’s feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, *the fulness of HIM that filleth all in all*, chap. i. 17—23.—Much the same kind of expression we have, *John* i. 16. “Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace,” or grace in proportion to his grace. Agreeably to this again, the Apostle had said in a parallel place in this very epistle, *chap.* i. 19. “For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.” Can this now prove Christ to be the supreme God, in the *fulness* of all divine perfections, who receiveth his fulness *by the gift*, and *at the will and pleasure* of another?—But to illustrate this matter a little farther: What is the argument and design which the Apostle is pursuing? What is the idea which he here had before his mind? What the beautiful allusion which he had in view?—He is guarding the *Colossians* against their *judaising* teachers. He supposes, that among other specious pretences, they might urge them with the extraordinary manifestation of God to the *Jews*, his glorious residence among ’em in the tabernacle and temple of old, &c.—“Let not *this*, nor any thing like this, move you (says he:) God dwelt in Jesus Christ in a way more extraordinary, in a manner more glorious and beneficial to Christians than ever he did among the *Jews*. The comparison is vastly to the advantage of Christ and his religion, and turns out to *their* shame, and *your* glory.” As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. He adds then, Beware lest any man spoil you thro’ philosophy, and vain deceit,

deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ; for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him.— If there should need any thing more to fix the sense of this place of Scripture, I would refer him to the Paraphrase of Mr. Pyle, and to the Paraphrase and Notes of the late reverend and learned Mr. Pierce. By what time he has read and considered these impartially, he will see what becomes of his vain and imaginary triumphs.

THE impartial part of mankind must judge whether this is not agreeable to the design and argument of the Apostle: and if it is, what becomes of that wise observation of his with respect to the *Semi-Arians*, another name of reproach without a meaning? All that he says with respect to them, amounts to this: That Christ, in his sense and opinion, cannot be God at all, *unless he be the God and Father of all; unless he be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; i. e. unless he be the God and Father of himself.* Thus he confounds the persons, and confounds all language, and the Scriptures themselves. And let him know, that he is not in all this arguing against those whom he abusively calls *Semi-Arians*, but against a plain Scripture-distinction, carefully preserved from one end of the Bible to the other.

THE next passage of Scripture which our author proceeds to*, is that remarkable one *Phil. ii. 5, 6. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, &c.* Here he puts on his wonted assurance; but with little reason, if he would have been at the pains to consult what several learned men (of the first rank) have offered upon this text. He might have known, that *Grotius*, Archbishop *Tillotson*, Bishop *Bull*, Dr. *Whitby*, and Dr. *Bennet*, all give up his interpretation. These were esteemed (what is vulgarly called) orthodox, and

* Page 225.

cannot be suspected to be partial in favour of the contrary opinion. And their reputation in the learned world (one would think) should be sufficient to weigh against this author's. The last mentioned (Dr. Bennet) has in his discourse on the *Trinity in Unity*, a book written professedly against Dr. Clarke, given us a long and laboured dissertation upon this text for upwards of thirty pages, and roundly asserts in the conclusion, that *St. Paul does not speak one syllable of Christ's divine nature here at all; but only treats of the humiliation and exaltation of his human nature: from whence the Apostle draws an argument for our practice of humility and condescension.*

I DON'T mention all this as if I expected that this gentleman should submit to mere authority, and be determined by the opinion of others, where he thinks his own sense can be fairly supported by Scripture, and reason, and just criticism. I would not be so determined myself; nor am I expecting it from him. His explication therefore, and the reasons by which he supports it, must be examined. He tells us, that by the *form of God*, we are to understand the *divine nature and essence*, and that it is capable of no other meaning. That is very strange; since, I believe, it will be found that the word *μορφή* never bears that sense in any one place of Scripture, and perhaps it is impossible it should be the sense here*. The word means an *appearance, likeness, or resemblance*. *St. Paul* himself determines the sense of it in the very next verse. He took upon him the *form* of a servant or slave; *i. e.* the *appearance or likeness* of one. — Now in order to shew that *his* sense cannot be true, let us consider what it is that Christ is here said to empty himself of. Is it not the *form of God* which he had before? And is it not plain also, that he took upon him *another form*, even that of a servant or slave? But if the *form of God* is the *nature*,

* See *Isa.* xlv. 13. where it is plain that *μορφή* (in the *Septuagint*) is the same as *εἶκον*. Compare *Heb.* i. 3.

essence,

essence, perfections of God, or a sameness or equality with God (according to this author's scheme) is it possible that he should empty himself of that? Are not the *nature, essence, perfections* of God immutable? Besides, if Christ was thus equal with God in all divine perfections, *originally* equal, what occasion could there be for St. Paul (a rational and exact writer) to talk of robbery in the case? This must be wholly superfluous, as it stands joined with the first part of the verse, according to this author's explication. He talks of *the learned world using the word in that sense at that day*; viz. as signifying *nature, essence, &c.** If he speaks of the Greek word, it is a mistake, and his assertion has no foundation. He talks of *the providence of God banding down allusions to the customs of those times*; so that we need not be at a loss, &c.† If he applies this to his own interpretation, it is a fond way of talking. The Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity would have been better preserved, and the peace of Christians better secured, if the world had never heard a word of any such explications as his are; and I imagine the providence of God cannot be brought into any concern about them.

BUT to leave such reveries as these: let us see whether the sense of the place may not be fixed by an interpretation agreeable to the context, and the whole tenor of Scripture; which must effectually overthrow his, and even show that his cannot be the sense. I shall therefore give what I take to be the true sense of this remarkable passage of Scripture in a short paraphrase, and then support it with proper notes; leaving the whole to his second thoughts, and the judgment of the impartial reader.

WE must read from the fourth to the end of the twelfth verse. *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*

Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, &c. q. d. “ Let no one amongst
 “ you be set upon pleasing his own humour, or
 “ minding his own private credit or interest only, or
 “ chiefly, but have also a just regard to the benefit
 “ of his fellow-christians, and a real design to further
 “ and promote it. By such a beneficent and con-
 “ descending disposition you will best imitate the
 “ example of Christ himself, our great Lord and
 “ Pattern : Who before his incarnation, tho’ he was
 “ in the form or likeness of God, (and often appear-
 “ ing in it to the patriarchs, &c.) yet was not eager
 “ or over-desirous of retaining that glory, so as to
 “ be unwilling to divest himself of it for so great a
 “ good to mankind as the procuring their redemp-
 “ tion and salvation; but willingly, and with great
 “ humility and kindness to us, divested himself of
 “ that *form*, and took upon him the likeness or ap-
 “ pearance of a servant, when he assumed our na-
 “ ture. And tho’ his becoming man was a great in-
 “ stance of humility and condescension, yet he did
 “ not stop there, by living as a mean and ordinary
 “ man; but he humbled himself still farther, by be-
 “ coming obedient unto death, even the death of
 “ the cross. For which great and wondrous conde-
 “ scension and goodness, God has now exalted him
 “ to a higher degree of glory and majesty than he
 “ had before; has bestowed upon him an authority
 “ and power over all creatures both in heaven and
 “ on earth, and has required all to submit to him
 “ as the universal Governor and Saviour, to the
 “ glory of God the Father, who has thus exalted
 “ him, and invested him with this authority and do-
 “ minion.”

THIS I take to be a fair and intelligible para-
 phrase of this passage of Scripture.

BUT to give a few notes, as I promised. — By the
 fore-mentioned paraphrase it is easy to see what we
 are to understand by Christ’s being in the *form* or
likeness

likeness of God; viz. that glory and majesty in which he frequently appeared to *Adam* and the patriarchs, as the image and representative of the invisible Father, whom no man hath seen at any time, or can see. The fore-mentioned *Dr. Bennet* shews largely, that this was the constant doctrine of the primitive writers; and he goes thro' and explains most of the instances in a large dissertation, which effectually confutes what this author has advanced as to the name *Jehovah* being applied to Christ, &c. — Or else being in the *form of God*, may refer to the *authority, dominion, and power* which he was intrusted with, and which he exercised antecedently to his coming into the world. Let this author consult *Pierce's Paraphrase and Notes on the Philippians*.

HOWEVER, which of these senses soever is pitch'd upon, it is plain the *form of God* cannot signify the *nature, essence, or perfections* of God. The word *μορφή* denotes (as I have said) *likeness, shape, or appearance*. But would it be an expression tolerable or proper to say, that *he* who is the *Supreme God* in nature, essence, &c. appeared in his own *shape* or *likeness*? Or has this the least countenance in any part of the Bible? Besides, *ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ* is opposed to his being *ἐν μορφῇ δούλου*. But was Christ really and truly a servant or slave? He stooped to servile offices in several instances; he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; But was he really, or in condition, a *servant* or *slave*? No. He only acted sometimes as a servant, and thus appeared in the *form* of one. Consequently his being in the *form of God*, does not signify his being the *Supreme God* in *nature and essence*; but his sustaining the *character and likeness* of God, in some instances, before his incarnation. Thus the force and beauty of the following words, *ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν*, is preserved, the construction more natural, and the connexion plainer. *Tho' he was in the form of God, yet he was not greedy of being honoured as God; but, on the contrary, he emptied*
I him

himself of his glory, and took upon himself the form of a servant.

As to the phrase *οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ᾔησατο*, the sense of this I have given in the paraphrase: *He did not covet or greedily catch at being honoured as God.* And what this author says as to *ἀρπαγμὸς* and *ἀρπαγμός*, as not being synonymous, but of different significations, I shall take this for mere confident assertion, till he produces his proofs. It does not appear (as I apprehend) that *ἀρπαγμός* is used by any author except St. Paul, and those that quote from him or comment upon him. But we find a great many words derived from one and the same verb, which in the Greek language are used both in the neuter and masculine gender exactly in the same sense: such as *βάπτισμα* and *βαπτισμός*, *φώτισμα* and *φωτισμός*, *μύγμα* and *μυγμός*; to which I could have added a great many more instances. And it lies upon this author to shew that the case of the word under question is different.

As to the other phrase, *τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ*, which our translators render *equal with God*, it has no such sense in Scripture, or in any Greek writer whatever: And Dr. Whitby has by various examples shewn, that it imports no more than to *be like God*. I refer this author to him: and he may read him at his leisure. There needs no more (I think) to wrest this text out of his hands, and to ruin all his triumphs from it*.

HIS

* The letter from the churches of *Vienne* and *Lyons* to the churches of *Asia* was written so early as the year 177. How they understood this phrase *οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ᾔησατο*, appears by the following passage.

Οἱ καὶ ἐπὶ τοσούτον Ζηλωταί, καὶ Μιμηταί Χριστοῦ ἐγένοντο, οὐ καὶ μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχον οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ᾔησατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ.

Now would they mention it as an instance of our Saviour's humility, and an example to be imitated by Christians, that he did not *ᾔησθαι ἀρπαγμὸν τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ*? Would they have pitch'd upon this phrase, and have stopt at it, and not proceed to the *ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτὸν*, if they had not understood it of his not assuming to himself to appear as a God?

Let

HIS reasoning from the next passage of Scripture †, (*viz.* *John* x. 30.) has been obviated already, and little farther needs to be added. He tells us, that when our Saviour says, *I and my Father are one*, this must be understood of *an unity of nature and essence, and not of a unity of consent, for this reason, that our Saviour is accounting for the preservation of the saints, &c. and shews that he is as able to preserve them as the Father, &c. for I and my Father are one*: in the original *iv* [*unum*] and not *ê* [*unus*]. The plain and obvious sense of the place is, that since the *Father* is greater than all, and hath a supreme uncontrollable power over all, and since he hath communicated of this power to the Son, therefore none can pluck the saints out of the Son's hands. So that being in the Father's hands, and being in the Son's hands, is one and the same thing in effect.

WHAT has this now to do with *nature and essence*?

BESIDES, is it not said that *the Father is greater than all*, excluding every other being, every other person, from being thus great in the same sense? — Is it not said again, that *the Father gave these sheep into the hands of the Son*; i. e. appointed him to be their Saviour, to instruct, guide, preserve, and bring

Let any one translate this passage otherwise than to this sense, if he can; *viz.*

“ These were to such a degree imitators and followers of Christ,
 “ who, tho' he was in the form of God, yet he would not assume
 “ to himself to appear with the splendor and magnificence of a
 “ God.”

Their letter being written so early, I cannot but esteem a considerable circumstance in favour of this interpretation of the text. It shews at least how the phrase was understood by the ages immediately following the Apostles themselves.

I am obliged to Mr. *Lardner*, I believe, for this note. Both he and the Lord *King* give the same date to the above-mentioned epistle.

Tho' this is only one instance out of many. Wherefore, for the true explication of this famous passage (*Phil.* ii. 6 — 12.) and the whole sense of the antient Christians upon it, see Mr. *Jackson's* edition of *Novatian*, page 173, 174. and 353 — 355.

† Page 230.

them to everlasting life? — But can he be the *Supreme God* in the sense of this author (having all power and authority originally, and of himself) to whom any thing is committed as a trust by another? Is not the distinction I have once and again mentioned, here carefully preserved? Nay, does not the same Evangelist record these very words of our Saviour, *My Father is greater than I?*

THUS have I considered the several texts he produces, in his tenth Sermon, to prove that those excellencies and perfections which are peculiar to the *Supreme God*, are ascribed to *Christ*; and that therefore he must be God in the highest sense, or the *Supreme God*. I have shewn that the passages of Scripture he turns us to, will not bear the sense he puts upon them, and that he by no means proves his point by them.

BEFORE he proceeds to another part of his design, he finds himself encumbered with a difficulty, which he thinks himself concerned to get clear of. He supposes his adversaries to object, “*That if the Son has the same nature and essence with the Father, then he cannot be a distinct person from him; for he must have the same understanding, and the same will; and if so, then he must be the same person*.*” And how does he get clear of this? No otherwise than by destroying the personality of the *Son* and *Spirit*, and by the most palpable contradictions. He tells you†, “*That the Anti-trinitarians imagine, that in order to constitute a distinct divine person, there is a necessity that there must be a distinct divine understanding and will.*” Any one that speaks of this matter so as to desire to be understood, would imagine so. He himself says, “*In order to constitute a person, there must be an understanding and will ‡.*” Very well. If the sacred Three then are three persons, (and thus he speaks of them thro’ his whole performance) under distinct

* Page 233. † Page 236. ‡ Ibid.

personal characters, *I, Thou, He, &c.* can they have but one *understanding* and *will*? i. e. can they be but one person? Is not *person* and *intelligent agent* the same thing in every intelligible writer? Can there be three distinct persons, where there is but one numerical individual understanding and will? Yes, he says; it cannot be proved "to be otherwise, "even in human persons." Do self-evident truths need to be proved? Does it need to be proved, that *two* or *three* are more than *one*? Can one intelligent agent, and another intelligent agent, and a third intelligent agent, (so he speaks of the persons all along) can these, after all, be but one intelligent agent? Has the man any ideas here? Can he shew us his meaning? But thus he goes on, for several pages together, in the end of his tenth Sermon, in contradiction to himself and common sense. But I have no inclination to attend him any farther in such jargon as this. It is a comfort divine revelation is a stranger to such language, and lays no such heavy burdens upon us as to divest us of our reason and understanding, in order to believe we know not what. Such pretences as these are human inventions, to support a cause which the Word of God has no concern with:

HE next proceeds * to mention several divine perfections in particular which are ascribed to Christ, and which he brings as proofs of his supreme Deity.

ONE is *Omnipotence*: But the texts which he produces from the New Testament by no means prove what he produces them for. It is said of Christ, *Phil. iii. 21. That he is able to subdue all things to himself.* But may not this be very well said of him *to whom all power is given both in heaven and in earth, and who is made head over all things*, without supposing him to be that *Supreme God*, who gave him this power, and who thus made him the *head* over all things? To whom also, as

St. Paul assures us, (1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.) *he is to deliver up the kingdom and himself, that God may be all in all*, by his sole personal dominion over the church in the future state? — His next text*, in which he says that Christ is called the *Lord God Almighty*, is not spoken of Christ, but of the Father, to whom that title *ὁ παντοκράτωρ*, is constantly and invariably applied by Scripture and primitive antiquity. Let him read Bishop Pearson on this word, in the first article of the *apostle's creed*. — Besides, how does it follow from that song (which he here quotes) being called, *The song of the Lamb*, that it was sung to the Lamb, and that therefore the *Lamb* must be no other than the *Lord God Almighty* so expressly and directly addressed to in that place.

WHAT he farther offers as to the works and effects of *almighty power* being ascribed to *Christ*, will better fall in our way hereafter; since he professedly re-assumes this argument in his twelfth sermon.

ANOTHER attribute or divine perfection peculiar to the Deity, which is ascribed to our Saviour, and by which his Supreme Deity is prov'd, is (he tells us) *omniscience*†. *He who knoweth all things must be truly God*. He produces in proof of this, the words of Peter (*John* xxi. 17.) *Peter said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*. Does this author then really believe that Peter took Christ to be the supreme omniscient God, when he said this? By the same argument he may prove, that all true christian believers are the supreme omniscient God, because St. John says of them, *Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things*, 1 John ii. 20.

EVERY one knows that such forms of speaking are usual in all manner of writings, without intending them to be understood strictly and absolutely: This manner of speaking was common amongst the *Jews*.

Let this author consider the words of the woman of Tekoa to David, 2 Sam. xiv. 17, 19, 20. And if this was a usual way of speaking amongst the Jews, this shews why our Saviour suffered Peter to go without a severe rebuke (as he himself reasons upon this place) even because he understood him as making use of a common form of speech, without intending to insinuate in the least, that he took Christ for the omniscient God. The apostles had used this expression concerning Christ, even before his death and resurrection, John xvi. 30. *Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, &c.* And what do they conclude from this? Not that he was the supreme omniscient God, but that he came forth from God. And who does not see the difference between their conclusion and our authors?

IN confirmation of his argument, he adds, *that Christ in character of the supreme God, gives a commission to Peter, upon the spot, to feed his sheep**. What a way of arguing is this? Did there need any more authority to give this commission to Peter, than that which he gave to all his disciples, Matt. xxviii. 18. and yet he gave this commission by an authority delegated to himself. *All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth : Go ye therefore, &c.* — He adds, *that Christ, as he is the omniscient God, forewarns Peter, at the same time, of his Death*; as if the knowledge of future events might not be communicated from the omniscient God to a creature, even to a mere man; and as if this had not also been actually given to several of the prophets under the Old Testament. What a weak and loose way of reasoning is all this.

I ADD, that this manner of speaking of persons, as *knowing all things*, is often used in the New Testament, with respect to such as our author will hardly take for the supreme God. I have already taken notice of what the apostle John (1 Epist. ii. 20.) says to

those he wrote to, viz. that *they had an unction from the Holy One, and knew all things*. To which he adds (ver. 27.) *the same anointing teacheth you all things*. And St. Paul prays for Timothy, *The Lord give thee understanding in all things*, 2 Tim. ii. 7.— Does any man of common sense suppose that these sacred writers here meant any more than a knowledge of God's revealed truth superior to what others had, who did not partake of this unction, or these communications? Nay, do not we in common speech say, *such a one knows every thing*? But surely we do not mean that the person is strictly omniscient. — A modest man would be ashamed of such reasoning.

HE tells us*, that we have another passage, where Christ is declared to be *the searcher of hearts, which is the special prerogative of the all-wise God*. He refers us to Jer. xvii. 10. and 1 Kings viii. 39. *I the Lord search the hearts, I try the reins. Thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of the children of men*. Now who is the person speaking in the first of these texts? Let him consult the prophet, and he will find it is the *supreme God, even the God and Father of all*, and who is spoken to in the latter text? The very *same person* again, *the God of Israel*, whom Solomon is addressing himself to in his prayer at the dedication of the temple. The personal characters *I, Thou*, are used in both places. If these texts are to be applied to *Christ*, they prove that he is the very *person* of the *Father*. Thus they prove too much.

HE tells us again, *that it is said of Christ, that he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man*, John ii. 24, 25. Let him take notice that this is spoken even of the man Christ Jesus, as he will plainly see if he consults the context; and is this any more than a prophet may do? Is not *Elisha* a plain instance? — Not that I intend to insinuate a comparison betwixt either *man* or *angel*, and our *blessed Lord*, in point of

knowledge. But it is plain from all this, that *knowing the thoughts* is not a property so peculiar to the *supreme Godhead*, as that it may not be communicated, or that we must necessarily conclude concerning any one of whom this is said, that he must be the *supreme God*.

THE same answer serves for the other text he mentions, Rev. ii. 23. *All the churches shall know that I am he that searches the hearts and the reins*. Let him read the very next words, *I will give unto every one of you according to your works*. Christ is there speaking of passing judgment; and we know all judgment is committed to him, and that God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ: Nay, that God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom he hath ordained. And this very revelation, by vertue of which Christ is enabled to *search the hearts and the reins* of all the members of his church, and to pass judgment upon them according to their works, is expressly said to be given unto him from God, *chap. i. ver. 1*. Now if Christ as *man* shall judge the world as *man*, then he may search and know the hearts in order to judgment. But will this prove him to be the *supreme God*, who has *ordained* and *appointed* him to this important work and office? Would any man talk and reason in this manner, that was not incumbered with an hypothesis that must be supported at any rate.

BUT what if, after all, it should plainly appear from Scripture, that there was something which Christ was ignorant of? will not this be a sufficient warrant for putting a limited interpretation upon general expressions, which is so usual in other cases, and so frequent in all languages? Christ himself tells us, that he did not know the day of judgment, and in words as plain as can be, confines the knowledge of that particular to his Father only, Mark xiii. 32. *But of that day and hour knoweth no man [i. e. no one, no person] no not the angels that are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father*. It is observable,

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that

that the *Father only*, in his own person, is he that knoweth the day of judgment: Every other *person* is excepted. The distinction therefore which this author labours* about two distinct intelligences in Christ, proves him to be two *persons*, if it proves any thing. And if he could prove that absurdity, it would not at all help him; because, according to this text, (compared with *Matt. xxiv. 36.*) there is, and can be, no sense, in which Christ the Son could know the day there spoken of, but that in which he must be, not the *Son*, but the *Father only*; it being expressly said, that no person knew it but the *Father only*. This text alone, so long as it stands in Scripture, will for ever confound and condemn the whole scheme of orthodoxy, falsely so called.

BESIDES, there is an evident gradation in the text. Christ had excepted himself in general before, by saying *no man*: He adds particulars, and rises to the angels as superior beings, and excepts them, and then the *Son* himself as above them. In this author's way, the gradation and force of the text is lost. Let him fancy what *union* he pleases, yet the *Son* is not the *Father*; and therefore if he knew of that day and hour *by any principle of intelligence*, how could it consistently with truth be said, that the *Father only* knew it? Is not Christ *one*, whatever distinct principle of intelligence this author would suppose? Does he not except himself in his *whole person*? And does not this interpretation of his then make the words of Christ a mere evasion? Let him not impute this to *him*, who came to bear witness to the truth, and says absolutely of himself, that the *Son* knew not the day of judgment. How is this true, if he knew it either as *God* or as *Man*? Let this author consider him in what sense soever he will, as the *Son*, yet he is not the *Father*. His distinction therefore here is a mere shuffle, and by no means serves his purpose. If he durst venture himself with such an author as *Dr. Clarke*, he would find that the most con-

siderable of the antiénts understood this text, not of the human nature of Christ, but of his whole Person, even in his highest capacity. The words of *Irenæus* and *Basil* on this head are decisive*.

THE next perfection peculiar to *supreme Deity*, which is ascribed to our Saviour (he tells us †) is *omnipresence*. This is a consequence (he says) of the former, *viz.* of his being *omniscient*. But if he has failed in his proof of that, what must become of this? But let us consider his texts.

THE first is, Col. i. 17. *He is before all things, and by him all things consist*. The plain sense of this place (if he will carefully look into the context) is, that as *God created all things by Christ, who is the first-born of every creature*; so he preserves and upholds all things by him too.

THE next is, Heb. i. 3. *Upholding all things by the word of his power*. But may not this be meant of the *Father's* power? This construction the words will naturally bear; and this is more agreeable to the foregoing phrases, *Who being the brightness of his [the Father's] glory; and the express image of his [the Father's] person; and upholding all things by his [the Father's] power*; not his own power. This seems to be the scope of the text. As the *αὐτῷ* just before relates to the Father, so 'tis reasonable to think it does here. — And upon this supposition, what is the text to his purpose?

BUT this I need not build upon, tho' I may do it †; for suppose it to be understood of *Christ's*

* Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity, p. 133, 134. Second edit.

† Page 261.

† Some have thought our author right in understanding the words [*his power*] of the *Son's own power*; because it is not *αὐτῷ*, but *αὐτοῦ*, contracted from *ἐαυτοῦ*, and accordingly written with an aspirate: *Αὐτῷ* would certainly have referred to the Father; but *αὐτοῦ* as necessarily reciprocates to the Son. — It is remarkable, that St. *Cyril contra Julianum*, does not only read *αὐτοῦ*, without an aspirate; but explains it further, by adding *τῷ πατρὶ*. *Lib. viii. fol. 259.*

power, yet we know who it was that gave him all power both in heaven and in earth, and who hath put all things under him.

BUT indeed our author himself does not seem to build much upon these places, having more express testimony (he says) for the *omnipresence* of Christ, even words spoken by our Saviour himself*. He turns us to *Mat. xviii. 20. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* He does not attempt to lead us into the sense of this passage. I should have been glad of his assistance if he had done so. To explain indeed difficult places of Scripture, does not seem to be his talent; but rather to perplex and confound plain and obvious ones, in support of a favourable hypothesis.

PERHAPS it may be difficult for any man to ascertain the manner of Christ's presence with his people in this world: He is present by his *word*, by which he hath more fully made known the will of God to men; he is present by his *spirit*, which he promised to send to supply his place when he left our world, *John xvi. 7, 13, 14.* Or else, since Christ is speaking of *prayer* in the foregoing verse, it may mean, that he will be so present, as to hear their prayers, and intercede for the acceptance of them with his Father. He may be present in any of these senses, and yet not be that *supreme Being* who is spoken of in the Old Testament as filling both Heaven and earth, &c. I should be glad of his assistance to give a rational explication of this matter, consistent with what Christ says of himself in other places; *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: Again I leave the World, and go to the Father, &c.*

THE next perfection he mentions is *eternity* †. Here I shall be very short, being ready to allow all that *eternity* to the Son which is expressed by his being *in the beginning, and before all worlds, &c.* when these phrases are explained in a way consistent

* Page 263.

† Page 265.

with his being from the *Father*, and not the *Father* from *him*. The *Father* alone is without any original, or cause of his existence; the *Son* is from the *Father*. Any eternity consistent with this, I am not disposed at present to dispute with him. The *Son* may be thus *eternal*, and yet not stand upon the *same level of equality* (to use a quaint expression of his) with the *self-existent, underived, unbegotten God and Father of all*. Let him read, for his further satisfaction, the conclusion of the Remarks on Dr. *Waterland's* Second Defence, by *Philaethes Cantabrigiensis*.

THE next perfection he speaks of as ascribed to Christ, is *immutability, or unchangeableness, whereby he is proved* (as he tells us†) *to be the same God with the Father, the true and supreme God*. It is very strange, if the first text he mentions † proves this; where indeed, tho' the Son is called *God*, and *his throne is said to be for ever and ever*, yet it immediately follows (in a verse which he has omitted) that he hath a God above him, who has appointed him to his office, and from whom he is to receive his reward. As to the following part of the text, it is very questionable with me, whether it is spoken of the Son or no. In support of this, I refer him to Mr. *Emlyn's* Examination of Dr. *Bennet*, p. 39, &c. and to a book intituled, *Christian Liberty asserted, and the Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity vindicated*, (in Answer to Dr. *Waterland's* book called *The Importance, &c.*) p. 87—90. where he will find that all the primitive christian writers understood the text of God, the Father of Christ.

THE next text he mentions does not (I apprehend) speak of the *person* of Christ at all, but of his doctrine and religion: *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*; Heb. xiii. 8. And for the confirmation of this sense, let him consult *Acts* v. 42. 1 *Cor.* i. 23. 2 *Cor.* iv. 5. as well as other places. Besides, the connexion with what goes be-

† Page 267. † Heb. i. 8, 10.

fore, and what follows after, seems plainly to determine the sense here. In the foregoing verse the Apostle is exhorting those he wrote to, *to remember them that had the rule over them, who had spoken unto them the Word of God; whose faith they should follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines, &c.* This is the subject the Apostle is upon; he is pressing the *Hebrews* to a firm adherence to the religion of Christ, and that they should not be deceived and led away with the false notions of the *Jewish* doctors about the absolute necessity of their ceremonial law. It is his design to shew that it is faith in Christ and his religion that justifies and saves, and which is to last and continue to the end of time: *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.* Therefore they should adhere to that religion, and not be drawn aside from it, which is the completing and perfecting constitution, of which the law of *Moses* was only a temporary and figurative representation. The plain meaning is, that *that* is the *original scheme* formed, the *method* fixed upon from the beginning for the recovery of a lost world. In this sense Christ says, *Abraham rejoiced to see my day*: And it might have been said of *Adam* too, with respect to the first promise. The design was kept in view, more or less, thro' every age, till the promised Christ appeared. And after his appearance, we are justified by him, and his religion, from all those things from which we could not be justified by the law of *Moses*. And in the same method shall all good men be justified and accepted, thro' every age, till the consummation of all things; and in this way shall they be openly acknowledged and acquitted at the great decisive day. *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.*

I MUST now attend him to another head of argument for the *supreme Deity of God the Son, and his*
equa-

equality with the Father, which is taken from those works which were performed by him. The stupendous work of creation is ascribed to him, (he tells us †) whereby he brought all things out of nothing into being and existence. Here he makes a great flourish to little purpose. Creation is a work (he tells us) peculiarly divine, so plain a proof of supreme Deity, that the Father himself claims supreme Deity upon it alone; that it carries in it the notion of Eternity, Omnipotence, and absolute Sovereignty, &c.

Now to set this matter in a clear light, under the conduct of divine revelation, let the following observations be attended to.

WE allow that the work of creation must be wrought by the power of the Supreme God. If he thought fit to employ another agent in that work, yet this agent must derive all his power from the *Supreme God*, and the work must be said to be his in the most high and absolute sense. Whether therefore he made the world mediately or immediately, by himself, by his angels, or by his Word and Son, his eternal Power and Godhead will be equally seen by the things that are made, and the same honour and glory will be ultimately due to him. The light of nature does not determine this point, *viz.* whether the *supreme and self-existent God* created the world immediately or mediately. And by what medium will this author prove that it requires a greater power to make a finite world than can be communicated to another? The New Testament tells us, that God created all things by *Jesus Christ*, and that by *his Son he made the worlds*. But will this prove the *Son* to be that *God*, who in the Old Testament is described as the maker of heaven and earth? For what would this amount to, but that *Jesus Christ* is that *God* who made all things by *Jesus Christ*? that the *Son* is that *God* who made the worlds by his *Son*? *God*, even the *God* and

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the original author and maker of all things. But this does not hinder another person's acting in *subordination* to him, as *employed* by him, and *ministering* to him; which is the constant, uniform language of antiquity. — To illustrate this matter a little by a like instance: We know that with respect to God's bringing *Israel* out of *Egypt*, it is said, *Deut.* xxxii. 12. *The Lord alone did lead him*: Yet we know too, that he led that people by the hand of *Moses*, and that the Lord sent his *angel* and brought them out of *Egypt*, *Numb.* xx. 16. — Now, agreeably to this, it may be said that *God* is the maker of heaven and earth; and yet this does not exclude another's acting in *subordination* to him.

As to the texts he produces, they have been most of them considered already. What we have *Psal.* cii. 25, &c. and which is quoted *Heb.* i. 10. very probably does not refer to Christ, but to the Father. For the proof of which I have already referred him to Mr. *Emlyn*, &c. — As to the other text, *Col.* i. 16. it is plain that Christ is there called *the first-born of every creature, the image of the invisible God*, evidently and carefully distinguished from him, and set in *subordination* to him. Consequently, whatever is said as to all things being created by him, it must be interpreted in consistency with what had been before declared concerning *God* and *him*. Can he be the *one supreme God*, from whom he is with so much care and exactness distinguished in this, and every other passage of Scripture? Can he be the *supreme God*, who is here called the *first-born of every creature*? Can the supreme self-existent God be the *first-born* of the creation, or the *beginning of the creation of God*? as St. *John* styles Christ, *Rev.* iii. 14.

As to Christ's being the *preserver* and *upholder* of all things, which he produces as the next proof of his

his supreme Deity *, the places of Scripture he turns us to, have been considered already. However, let him consider the whole context of *Heb. i. 3.* and see what a strange way of proving Christ to be the supreme God his is, by applying that sentence [*upholding all things by the word of his power*] to this purpose, when detached from the rest of the chapter. How plain is it to every intelligent reader, that Christ is there spoken of in characters by which he is distinguished from God the Father, and inferior to him? *God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son; whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, &c.* Let our author now sit down and consider how he will prove Christ to be the supreme God, in his sense, from this Scripture; where he is not only represented as the Son of God, but as sent to reveal his will to men; as constituted and appointed the heir of all things by another; as a ray of glory emitted from him, &c.

HE then goes on, and tells us †, that besides the works of creation and providence ascribed to Christ, there are other works performed by him in consequence of his being mediator, which necessarily infer his supreme Deity: And one of these is his governing and over-ruling all things, and that not only in the world, but also in his church. Does this author read his Bible, and consider what he reads? Is the government and dominion of Christ spoken of in any other terms, throughout the whole Bible, than as given and committed to him by another? Does not our Saviour himself say, *that all power is GIVEN unto him both in heaven and in earth*? Is it not elsewhere said, *that God hath put all things under his*

fect? and that *he is EXCEPTED that did put all things under him?* and that *when the end shall come, he shall DELIVER UP the kingdom to GOD, even the FATHER?* And how does he thus prove Christ's supreme Deity, by a *dominion* committed to him by another? — What he says therefore of *Christ's* having a *natural* and *original* right to govern all things, &c. is not the language of the Scripture. At this rate he must receive the kingdom from *himself*, and all power both in heaven and in earth from *himself*, and at last deliver it up to *himself* again. But this is such confusion both in language and common sense, as the sacred writings are utter strangers to. In short, if Christ had an original right to the government of the world, how comes this right (according to the Scripture-language) to be given him by the Father? Did the Father give him what he had a right to before? If he had such an original right, he could not need to have it committed to him; for it would necessarily have continued with him, when he took our nature upon him, without any *gift* or *appointment* from another.

HE tells us afterwards*, that to execute such a trust requires perfections peculiar to the supreme Deity. How does he prove that it requires any perfections but what may be communicated to *Christ* from the *one God and Father* of all, who has committed this *kingdom* to him, and put all things under him?

IT is pleasant enough to see him, after this†, starting an objection which overturns his whole scheme; but it is no objection with him, because it is *owned* and *allowed*: *owned* and *allowed* in flat contradiction to every argument which he has offered from divine revelation. He allows that *Christ*, as *mediator*, was the *Father's deputy* and vicegerent, and that the government he received is from the Father. And is there any other government of Christ spoken of

* Page 305.

† Page 307.

throughout the whole Bible besides this? If there be, he will turn us to chapter and verse. And till he does this, all that he offers for some pages together, stands for nothing; has no foundation in Scripture; is a mere invention to support a human hypothesis; is void of reason, and inconsistent with revelation.

I MUST next attend him to the head of *worship*. Here he tells us*, that *religious worship* and adoration, due only to the *Supreme God*, is both paid to *Christ*, and was claimed by him. Under this part of his performance I meet with greater confusion and contradiction (if possible) to the constant language and doctrine of the Bible than in any other.

HE sets out with giving us some explications and distinctions with respect to the nature and kinds of *worship*†. There are two objects of *worship* (he says) existing, and infinitely differing from each other; viz. *God*, and *the creature*. That *worship* which is due to the *Supreme God*, and which has infinite perfections for its object, can admit of no degrees; because there are no degrees in infinite perfections. This only (he tells us) is *religious worship*. That which is due to the creature, which hath finite perfections, is but *civil worship*, of which there are various degrees, according to the different finite excellencies of the object.

HERE, it seems then, there can be no religious worship but what is absolutely *supreme* in the highest sense. Now if it appears from Scripture, that *that worship* which is paid to *Christ*, is paid by the command of *another*, to the glory of *another*, and it would be downright blasphemy to apply some of the instances mentioned to the *one God and Father of all*, even the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, what is the consequence? If *inferior worship* is paid to him, by this author's account he is a creature. And yet that such *inferior worship* is

* Page 313. † Page 314, 315.

paid to him, every one must see, that reads his Bible. Either this author then must give up his Bible, or part with his explications and distinctions; which indeed he takes care himself to destroy presently. For he tells us*, that *if it appears that religious worship was actually paid to Christ, and that by the APPOINTMENT OF HEAVEN, the consequence is, he must be the supreme God.* What must one do with such a man as this? He tells us here, that *religious worship* must be absolutely *supreme*, and that there is no *religious worship* but what is so; and yet in the same breath says, that *worship* is paid to Christ *by the appointment of heaven.* What can he mean by those words [*the appointment of heaven*] consistently with Scripture and common sense, but the *appointment of the God of heaven*, even the *God and Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ? And is that *supreme worship absolutely supreme*, which is given by the appointment of *another*? Is it not absurd to say of the *supreme God*, that he is worshipped to the *glory* of another? Does his Bible ever confound that *worship* which is due to *Christ* with that which is due to his *God and Father*? Never. — Upon this foot this part of the controversy might intirely rest.

BUT let us attend him in the instances which he produces. He brings some passages out of the Old Testament, which have been sufficiently obviated already, and are every one of them answered and accounted for by Dr. Bennet, p. 51 — 66. “The truth of it is (says the learned Doctor) it was usual in those parts for such as delivered messages from others, to speak after the same manner those persons would have done in whose names they came; and those that returned answers by messengers, spoke and behaved as if those very persons were present in whose names the messengers came.”

LET us now follow him to his proofs from the New Testament: *There (he says *) we have plain and express proof, that divine worship, worship due only to the Supreme God, was paid to Jesus Christ.* If it be so, he sets out a little unfortunately; for the first text he mentions proves the direct contrary: Heb. i. 6. *And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him.* Now what is the inspired author's design in the beginning of this epistle to the Hebrews? Why, to confirm those he wrote to in their adherence to *Christ*, and their profession of his religion. To this end he shews, that *Christ* is greater than any messenger by whom God had yet spoken to men: And having given several hints of the greatness of his character, he shews, that the *angels* themselves (the highest order of beings) are not now exempted from his *jurisdiction* and *dominion*. But there is a particular time mentioned when this grant was made to him, even at his resurrection and exaltation. *To which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? — And when he bringeth again his first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him.* So the words should rather be render'd†. The Apostle

* Page 321.

† Some are of opinion, that *πάλιν* (in the text under consideration) is not to be taken with *εισαγάγη*, but must be construed as in our translation; because in the verse before we have *καὶ πάλιν ἔγωγε ἔσομαι*, &c. And again, (q. d. in another place, he says.) And then in this verse, *ὅταν δὲ πάλιν*, &c. And again (i. e. in another place also) when he had brought, &c. It seems necessary (in their opinion) to understand *πάλιν* equally in each verse for the Apostle's introducing again a new instance of *Christ's* exaltation. But they acknowledge (however the order of the words be taken) that the passage seems to refer to the resurrection of *Christ*, when (as the Apostle says) *he was constituted and declared to be the Son of God with power*; Rom. i. 4. — But notwithstanding the reasons here alledged to the contrary, there are several of opinion, that *πάλιν* should be taken with *εισαγάγη*: Among the rest, Dr. Whitby. See his paraphrase on this text,

here

here plainly speaks of the time of Christ's resurrection. He was brought into the world at his incarnation; at his death he left the world, and went to the Father; at his resurrection God is said to have again brought him into the world. Then, after his resurrection, all power was given to him both in heaven and in earth, and a more excellent and extensive authority conferred upon him. See more to this purpose in *Pierce's Paraphrase and Notes* on this epistle.

BUT the ascertaining the time when this grant was made to him, is not at all necessary to my present argument. Whensoever it took place, it was by the authority and appointment of another, even of that God, who hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son; who hath appointed him heir of all things; who hath put in subjection to him the age to come; and who hath also required the angels themselves to be subject to him. — Now is that worship supreme, which is appointed to be given to Christ at a particular time by another? and that is paid him by the order and at the command of another? — Behold his proof of supreme worship given to Christ!

HIS next instance is taken from *Mat. ii. 11.* * where it is said, that when the wisemen came into the house, and saw the young child, with MARY his mother, they fell down and worshipped him, &c. — Does this author think then, that these wisemen took the child Jesus for the supreme God, and worshipped him as such? But here he found the word *worship*, and it must signify with him *supreme worship*, in defiance of common sense. If he would have taken the pains to have consulted *Dr. Whitby* on *Mat. viii. 2.* he would have found that the Jews, and others in those Eastern countries, paid adoration both to kings and prophets, either by bending the knee, or by prostration or falling down before them. He gives us there several instances; and then draws

* Page 322.

this

this conclusion, viz. *that the adorations given to our BLESSED LORD by those JEWS and GENTILES, who knew nothing of his DIVINITY, could be no argument of his DIVINE NATURE; but rather were paid him, as the MESSIAH, or as a PROPHET sent of God, &c.* Let this author remember, that this was written by Dr. *Whitby*, when he was in the *Orthodox Scheme*, so call'd. But he saw his mistake some years before he died, and wrote very strenuously on the other side of the question; and with great integrity order'd his last thoughts to be publish'd to the world.

As to his other instances during our Saviour's ministry, it is sufficient to refer him again to Dr. *Bennet*, who spends an entire chapter in shewing, that during our Saviour's ministry, neither the Jews, nor his disciples themselves, did believe that he was any more than a mere man, extraordinarily assisted and conducted by the Spirit of God. He endeavours to prove this by arguments, which this author will find it very hard to overturn. If so, whatever worship and respect they paid him, they cannot be supposed to worship him as the *Supreme God*.

As to other instances of worship, which he mentions, since the ascension of Christ, such as believing in him, trusting in him, praying to him, &c. surely this may be paid by Christians, as persuaded, *that he is able to save unto the uttermost all those that come unto the Father by him; and that God hath made him unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; that God hath put all things under his feet; and hath required that to him every knee should bow, to the glory of God the Father, and appointed him to be the great Mediator betwixt himself and a guilty world; and hath set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, &c.* I say, Christians may pay this worship and regard to him on such accounts, without supposing him to be that *Supreme God* who has commission'd, sent and given him for these purposes.

WILL

Will this Author produce us any instances where the *worship* of Christ is put upon any other foot? I don't mean, by a mere single passage, or proposition, detach'd from the rest of the context; but interpreted in a fair and rational connexion with it. Is it not evident, that those instances of this *worship*, which are given in several places of the New Testament, cannot possibly be understood to relate to the *Supreme God*? Let him consider coolly and impartially, that remarkable passage, *Rev. v. 11, 12, 13. And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, &c. saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, &c. heard I, saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.* Is not here a plain distinction made betwixt those acclamations and praises given to *Christ the Son of God*, and those given to his *Father who sitteth upon the throne*, as the first original of all mercies, the fountain of all knowledge, wisdom and power, and the supreme governor of the world; and who exalted the Lamb that was slain, or Christ, who suffered (and *because he suffered*) for our sins, to sit on the same throne?—It is observable, that this is called *new worship*, ver. 9. as belonging peculiarly to Christians, who worship the *only true God*, through Jesus Christ the Mediator, whom he sent.—Let him read again, *Rev. i. 5, 6.—Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us kings and priests unto his God and Father* [*το Θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ἀνάμνη*] *unto Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Is not here an evident distinction preserved again? Unto Christ, the faithful witness, who came down from heaven to preach to us the Gospel of truth; who taught it, and died for it; whom *God* raised from the dead, and in reward of his sufferings, made him *Lord, Governor,*

vernor, and Judge of the whole world: To Him, who so loved us, as to die for our salvation; and who, upon our compliance with his settled terms, has render'd us capable of enjoying a *dignity and happiness*, far superior to God's antient people the Jews; nay, of receiving an *honour* far surpassing all the fading titles and glories of this lower world: To Him be *praise, dominion and glory for ever and ever, Amen*. How carefully is *Christ* here distinguished from his *God* and *Father*; and yet such *worship* as this paid to him? Is not here *worship* given to the *One*, which cannot possibly be given to the *Other*?

INDEED, after our author has endeavoured to prove his point, That *Christ* is the *Supreme God*, and is to be *worshipped* as such, he comes*, and makes the following concession. "It is true (says he) that
 " in our addresses to the Father, we must come in
 " the name of *Christ*; but it can by no means be
 " hence inferred, that therefore the Lord *Jesus Christ*
 " is not the ultimate object of our worship: For that
 " very act, in coming to the Father in the name of
 " his Son, makes the Son as much the object of our
 " religious worship as the Father; for our trusting to,
 " and relying upon, the mediation of the Son, and
 " employing him as our advocate with the Father, is
 " as high an act of religious worship, as can possibly
 " be performed to the Father himself."

I COULD scarce believe my own eyes, when I read this. It is just as if I should say, that if I can find means and opportunity of applying immediately to the *Prince of Wales*, to intercede for me with his *Father* King *George*, for a favour which the King only can give, I thereby advance the *Prince* to the same dignity and honour with his *Father*, and make him really *King of Great-Britain*. This our Author brings in by way of *concession*; a *concession* which overthrows his whole argument upon the head of worship.

“ THIS (he tells us farther) is not because the Father is possessed of any superior *divine excellency*; but is entirely owing to this, that the *Father* is the person of the Trinity, who, in the *oeconomy of salvation*, sustains the character of *Supreme Deity*, and maintains the rights of the Majesty of heaven.” If then (as this concession allows) the *Son* does not sustain the character of *Supreme Deity* in the *oeconomy of salvation*; how dares he assert and maintain, as a necessary article of faith, that *Christ* is the Supreme God? Is not this being wise above what is written? Surely, at least, it is so; though it were not opposite to what is expressly written. Therefore, to say no more, all this is mere presumptuous invention, and just as if the Bible had never been written.

AGAIN, he says, “ That if it had been so ordain’d in the method of grace, that the *Son* had been that person agreed on to sustain that *character*, as he might have been; he must have been addressed to in the same manner, through the mediation of one of the other two:” *i. e.* through the mediation of the *One God and Father of all*. Strange! Who art thou, Oman, that dost pretend to assert this? (which evidently subverts the whole *oeconomy* of the Christian dispensation, and roots up the foundation both of natural and revealed religion) And where dost thou find it?

IN all this, our author follows his master Dr. W——d, who has been sufficiently exposed by his learned adversaries for such a way of talking. See *Christian Liberty asserted*, p. 36, 37, &c. The Reply. The *Modest Plea*, &c.—The truth of it is, that this is language which the sacred writings are utter strangers to; and which, in the account of the truly primitive writers, would be no less than impious blasphemy. “ According to this new, and before unheard-of, hypothesis (says the author of *Liberty asserted*) there is not only no essential or real distinction,

tion, in nature and natural powers, between the *Persons* of the *Father* and the *Son*, but that the *God* and *Father* of *all*, who is above all, and who is the *God* of the *Son* himself, might have been the *Son*, acted the ministerial part, and in all things have been obedient and subject to the will and commands of the *Son*, as his *Father* and *God*. This is telling the world (says he) that the primary and fundamental article both of natural and revealed religion, the *unity of God*, has no foundation: And instead of the *one God* of nature and Scripture, is setting up a worse than heathen system of three fictitious and equally supreme Deities, who, by agreement among themselves, go by different names, without any real difference of nature, power, or authority; all being in themselves, and in their nature equally self-existent, independent, undivided."—There is not a single text in all the Scripture to prove this; nor any one single testimony of primitive antiquity, for above three hundred years, in the least to this purpose; but there are above a thousand testimonies of both, full and direct against it.

AFTER our author has dispatched this point about *supreme worship's* being paid to *Christ*; before he proceeds to prove the *Supreme Deity* of the *Holy Ghost**, he makes a few inferences; which are little else than a low appeal to the passions and prejudices of the ignorant and the vulgar. I would undertake to shew, that what he offers under each of them, might, in the main, with equal, or stronger force, and much greater propriety, be turned upon himself, and his own explication.

As to the third particular†, where he endeavours to fasten the most dreadful guilt upon those who deny the *Deity of Christ* in *his* sense, and according to *his* explication; let him know, that they would not, they

* Page 352.

† Page 361.

dare not, deny any *honour* to *Christ*, their *Lord*, which the sacred Scriptures, the great rule of faith and practice, direct and require to be paid to him: They are ready to acknowledge him (though not the same *Being* with the *Father*, nor the very same *Person*, and that is what this author's unity amounts to, nor yet *equal* with the *Father* in all *divine* *perfections* and *glory*; yet) the most glorious and excellent of all *Beings* next to Him whom the Scriptures stile the *one God and Father of all*. They are ready to own him *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; who had glory with him before the world was, and by whom God made the worlds: Whom God hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, and made head over all things to his church: To whom God hath given a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on the earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father, &c.* This they readily, and with the utmost submission and gratitude acknowledge and rejoice in; upon the supposition, that after the most diligent and serious enquiry, they should yet be mistaken, they can hope for all proper allowances from Him, *who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.* It is their comfort, that their judgment is committed to the hands of the merciful Jesus, and is not to proceed from such weak, passionate, fallible creatures as this man and his friends.

ON the other hand, if he is not so full of himself, as to be above all advice, let him consider how he must answer it, if he should be found detracting from the *peerless, supreme majesty, authority and glory of the one God and Father of all*, and be giving these to another, without any sufficient warrant either from *Reason* or *Scripture*, and in opposition to both. Is there no danger in this case, as well as in the other?

I trust, and hope, he would then meet with that compassion and those merciful allowances, which he, with such a harden'd and unrelenting resolution, denies to his Christian brethren. These are my sincere hopes and wishes for him. But after all, this is a matter which deserves, I had almost said demands, his serious second thoughts.

BUT I am not willing to let this head of *worship* pass thus. It is a matter, in which the meanest honest Christian amongst us is concerned; and therefore I will endeavour plainly to state the fact, and shew upon what foot it stands in the language and account of Scripture.

IF we go through the Old Testament, we shall find that it is *one He, one Person, one God*, that is always spoken of as the great *object* of worship, under the single personal characters of *I, Thou, He*. *Thou shalt have no other Gods beside me: Thou shalt fear the Lord THY GOD, and serve him: Thou shalt worship the Lord THY GOD, and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve.* All the worship paid to God thro' the whole Old Testament, uniformly and constantly, is to Him, consider'd as *one Being, one Person, one infinitely perfect Mind, or Spirit*. And indeed it is evident from Scripture, that *individual living Person* only can be the object of worship; not *nature, essence, or substance*, but *Person*. And when the *Deity, or Divine Nature*, is spoken of as the object of worship, it is not by way of accuracy, but figuratively, and in a way of accommodation: Just as when we say *the King's Majesty*, not to signify the *Majesty* of the King, but the *King himself*; the *Person* of the King.

AND the constant language of the New Testament is agreeable. *My Father* (says Christ) *of whom ye say, that HE is your God*, John viii. 54. *When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven*, Luke xi. 2. *The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth:*
For

For the Father seeketh such to worship him, John iv. 23. I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, &c. Mat. xi. 25.—Did the Apostles, after they had received the promised Spirit, in their discourses or writings, either to Jews, or Gentiles, ever represent the matter otherwise? Search and see. Read *Peter's* first discourse, *Acts* ii. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, &c. Read again his second discourse, chap. iii. 13—26. *The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus, &c. Again, To us there is ONE GOD, the FATHER, 1 Cor. viii. 6, One God and Father of all, Eph. iv. 6.—That ye might with one mind glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Eph. iii. 14.*—But it would be endless to mention all the particulars; for this is the constant strain of the *New Testament*.

IT does not follow from all this, but that, as God might appoint a Mediator, so inferior and mediatorial worship may be paid to our Lord Jesus Christ, by the direction and command of God himself. Thus it is, in fact, according to the language of the *New Testament*. And all the texts this author has produced (without so much as one exception) when fairly compared with the context, do not prove Christ to be the *supreme object of worship*; but speak of subordinate, mediate and relative worship: So groundless is his assertion, that there can be no degrees in religious worship.

IN short, whatever the metaphysical nature, essence, or substance of the *Son of God* may be; yet the worship paid him, according to Scripture-direction and example, is never once placed upon that foot: But is always paid to him as being *Mediator*, ascribed to him not as *supreme*, but by the appointment and command of the Father, and as tending ultimately to the glory of God the Father. The texts are innumerable: *John* xv. 16. *Eph.* ii. 18. *ch.* v. 20. *Col.* iii. 17. *Phil.* ii. 11. *Heb.* xiii. 15. 1 *Pet.* iv.

iv. 11. To these may be added, those texts which I have already mentioned from the *Revelations*.—In fine, we are no where directed to address ourselves to God, as being three persons in one essence, or to conceive of the *Divine Nature*, as subsisting in *three persons*, when we worship. And since this is a matter of daily practice and concern, it is very strange (if any thing of this nature was intended) that we should not have *one* express rule given us to this purpose, or *one* plain instance left upon record. The Apostles, after they had received full instructions with respect to the Christian institution, never represent the matter, either to the Jews or Gentiles, in any other light than that in which I have now placed it.

WE find indeed express adoration of *Jesus Christ*, as well as of the *Father*; and *glory* given to him at the same time, and in conjunction with the *Father*. But is it any where said, that in giving this *worship* to him, we are to consider, or acknowledge him as the same *one Being* with the *Father*, or consider him as the same *one God*? Never once. All that appears is, that he is worthy to receive blessing and honour (on a particular reason and account) together with God, and in subordination to Him, who has *appointed*, *commissioned* and *sent* him; who has *advanced* and *exalted* him to his *throne*, and *given him a name* above every name; who has *put all things under him*, and yet is *himself manifestly excepted*, who did thus *put all things under him*. This I take to be a fair and just account of the matter of *religious worship*, according to Divine Revelation. I am sensible that all this is needless, consider'd as an answer to this author. But I was willing to state this matter, once for all, for the sake of sober, honest Christians, whom he first abuses by partial and delusive representations in a matter of great importance and daily concern; and then endeavours to terrify by insinuations of wrath and danger, without ground or foundation from reason

reason or Scripture*. But let it be their comfort, that the displeasure of a *wise, righteous, merciful Being* is not under *his* direction. *Who art thou, O man, that judgest another man's Servant?*

HE enters in the next place upon his proofs of the *Supreme Deity* of the *Holy Ghost*†: Where he gives just cause of complaint; since he cannot but know that the word *Spirit* is taken in very different senses in Scripture, and that it is highly absurd, from the Deity of the Spirit in one sense, to argue for it in all the rest. And yet no care is taken to lead his readers into these distinctions, or to explain this matter upon any rational foot of interpretation.

HE knows that *God the Father* himself is a Spirit, *John* iv. 24. and that his *power* is the *Holy Ghost*, *Luke* i. 35. For to make the third *person* there the *Father of Christ*, would confound the whole Gospel, and even his own oeconomy, which he builds so much upon. The manifestations of *God's power*, or *energy*, in the communication of miraculous gifts, are frequently call'd his *Spirit*, that fell, or was poured out on Christians: In which sense it is said, the *Holy Ghost* was not yet come, because Christ was not yet glorified, *John* vii. 39.—Now none of these are the *Spirit* (in the sense of *another person* distinct from the *Father*) and therefore characters and works attributed to the former, are no proof of the *Supreme Deity* of the latter. For to *God* and his *power* many greater things may be ascribed, than to another *distinct person*; and of which the question now before us is, whether he be the *Supreme God*.

THIS is what our author endeavours to prove; and the first instance he produces is, *Numb.* xii. 6, 7. compared with 2 *Pet.* i. 21. If this proves any thing, it proves too much; even that the *Holy Ghost* is the very

* Page 358, 359.

† Page 363.

person of the *Father*; that same *I the Lord*, who says, *he will make himself known unto the prophet in a vision*, &c.—The same is the case of his next instance, *Isaiah* vi. 8, 9, 10. compared with *Acts* xxviii. 25, &c.

IN both instances the truth is really this; that what *God* speaks may very properly be said to be spoken by the *Holy Ghost*; because *God* inspires his prophets by his *Holy Spirit*: And whatever is spoken by the *Holy Ghost*, may no less properly be said to be spoken by *God*; because it is spoken to the prophets by that *Spirit* which *God* has given them. Nay, in the *Revelation*, chap. xi. ver. 1, 3. even an angel is introduced as speaking in the *person* of *God*. *The angel stood—saying, I will give power unto my two witnesses*, &c.—Now such a way of interpretation as his, introduces an entire confusion of *persons*; and thus proves too much. And he knows that in a way of fair reasoning and argument, that which proves too much, is good for nothing. In his way, he destroys the *personality* of the *Holy Ghost*, and goes in company with the *Socinians*. Would he like to have his friends find him there? If not, they must find him in much worse company.

I SHALL now attend him to the New Testament, and consider the texts he brings from thence, and on which he lays the greatest stress. Here I could wish, that we might both, as honest enquirers after truth, join our endeavours to fix the sense of those places, which he has mention'd, by a just and rational interpretation. I am sorry to say, that I have found very little of such a disposition in this author hitherto, but rather a resolute adherence to a particular hypothesis, at the expence of christian charity, and at the expence (too often) of the reputation of the sacred writings, by making them inconsistent with themselves, and thereby giving too great an advantage to the enemies of revelation amongst us.—But let us with sobriety examine some of the principal texts produced.

THE first he mentions * is *Acts* v. 3, 4. where Peter says to *Ananias*, *Why hath Satan filled thy heart, to lie unto the Holy Ghost?* — *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.* — I answer; here the observation before mentioned takes place, viz. that in the stile of the Scriptures, the *Spirit* is frequently represented as *God's agent*, and *God* as revealing his will, and working by him: so that it cannot seem at all strange, that the same things are attributed sometimes to *God*, and sometimes to his *Spirit*; or that is said to be done to *God*, which is done more immediately to the *Spirit*. This is really the case in the text before us. *Lying to the Holy Ghost*, is in effect and consequence, *lying to God*, who sent his *Spirit*, under whose conduct the Apostles more immediately were, and in whom he dwelt. Does not our author know, that such a way of speaking is common in the writings both of the Old and New Testament? For instance, *1 Sam.* viii. 7. *They have not rejected THEE, but they have rejected ME.* What! Is *Samuel* here the most High God, and the King of *Israel*? By this author's method of interpretation, it should seem so. — Again, our Lord says to his disciples, *Luke* x. 16. *He that despiseth YOU, despiseth ME; and he that despiseth ME, despiseth HIM that sent me.* Are the disciples of Christ hereby placed in the same level of equality with *Christ* himself and his *Father*? — See likewise *1 Thess.* iv. 10. *He that despiseth, despiseth not MAN, but GOD.* And in *Acts* xxiii. 9. to oppose what is spoken by a *spirit*, or *angel*, is call'd *fighting against God*. — Thus now in the text under hand, he that lied to the *Apostles*, lied to the *Holy Ghost*; and he that lied to the *Holy Ghost*, lied to *God*, who had given them his *Spirit*. In short, the plain and obvious sense of the words is This, that attempting to deceive inspired persons, was not barely the crime of attempting to deceive men, but was (in effect) an attempt to

deceive God, by whose *Holy Spirit* these men were inspired, and under whose conduct they were. The primitive writers who have mentioned this text, have all along understood it thus: and even *Athanasius* himself thus interpreted it. See *Scrip. Doct.* p. 12. 2d Edit. and the *Reply to Mr. Nelson's friend*, p. 73.

OUR author comes afterwards, and says*, *In vain do the ANTI-TRINITARIANS say, that the Holy Ghost being no more than a created Spirit, yet lying to Him being the Father's minister, is really lying to God.* Who he refers to here, I cannot tell; but if he cannot name his authors, he should not have taken the liberty to misrepresent his adversaries, in order to confute them. All the rest of his arguing afterwards amounts to no more than this, That if the Holy Ghost be at all subordinate to the Father, (as the Scripture every where declares he is) then he is nothing at all superior to men. — Does any one (as *Dr. Clarke* observes) stand in need of help, to answer this? He should abate a little of his confidence, when he says†, *That unless his interpretation be admitted, the Apostle reasons absurdly, &c.* His interpretation of this text, and every other, may fall to the ground, and all his conclusions from them, with this also, *That the Holy Ghost is in the most strict and proper sense the true God*; and yet there will be no absurdity in the Apostle *Peter's* reasoning here. If the foregoing interpretation, which I have given, stands, as I imagine it will with all impartial persons, then this author must look to his consequences.

HIS next text‡, 1 Cor. iii. 16. has been explained, and his reasoning from it obviated already. — What he offers || concerning the *Holy Ghost* being stiled the *God of Israel*, and the *rock of Israel*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. introduces the same confusion of persons before

* Page 371.

|| Page 375.

† Page 373.

‡ Page 374.

hinted. What the God of *Israel* says by his *Spirit*, may be said to be spoken by *God* himself, for the reason before given.

HE tells us next*, that the name *Lord* is ascribed to the *Holy Ghost*, 1 *Thess.* iii. 11, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. and attempts to prove it by such an interpretation as was never (I believe) given of those texts before. In the former there is not the least ground to suppose, that the *Holy Ghost* is spoken of at all. Now *God himself direct our way unto you, &c.* and *the Lord make you to increase, &c.* i. e. may the same *God* assist your pious dispositions, &c. — The latter place† is evidently spoken of our *Lord Jesus Christ*. The Apostle is making a comparison betwixt the darker dispensation of the *Jews*, and the clearer discoveries of the Gospel. He tells us, *ver.* 6. that *God* had made him, and other preachers of the Gospel, *ministers*, not of the letter, but of the spirit, &c. Now the *Lord* (says he) is that Spirit, *ver.* 17. i. e. *Christ*, or his *gospel* and *religion*, is the true spiritual meaning of the *Jewish* law, which was but the outside and the letter. He is the *Messiah*, the great *blessing*, described and foretold by the *Jewish* prophets; and represented by the types and shadows of that dispensation. And as *he*, and his *religion*, is the true spiritual meaning and fulfilling of the *Mosaical* law; so his Apostles and Ministers are, in their preaching and office, more clear and illustrious, in proportion to the superior excellency of *Christ* to *Moses*, and the clearness and excellency of the institutions and doctrines of the *one*, in comparison of those of the *other*. — He tells us, that the words may be render'd, *As by the Lord the Spirit*. Suppose they may; yet what is that to his purpose? The Apostle's argument and design sufficiently appears from the foregoing interpretation; and the *Holy Ghost* is not so much as thought or spoken of.

—But he found the word *Spirit* here, and that must needs be interpreted of the *Holy Ghost*, without any regard to the argument, the design of the inspired writer, or the natural construction of the words*. This it is to quote and interpret texts of Scripture by mere unconnected sounds, sounds without a meaning, and so as to render the authors of the inspired books the most loose and inconsistent writers in the world. A man of skill or modesty would be ashamed to treat other authors in the like manner. Must a mere human hypothesis be thus supported? — Thus our author attempts to prove the supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost by the names and titles which are given to him.

He goes on to *the attributes and perfections signified by those names* †.

ETERNITY (he tells us) is ascribed to him. This he proves from *John* xv. 26. by such a piece of criticism as is not easily match'd. He says, *our Saviour expresses the procession of the Holy Ghost in the same manner as* JEHOVAH *expresses his own eternal existence: i. e. he who proceeds from another, or is sent, (for that is the meaning of proceeding) is the same Jehovah, the I am, who is necessary, unoriginate, proceeding from none, sent from none, derived from none.* No intelligent person needs any other assistance towards answering this, than barely to read the

* It may be a question, whether the words *ὁ κύριος πνεῦμα* *τὸ*, can properly be rendered either as they are in our translation, or as this author would have them. For it is observable, that thro' the *New Testament*, wherever the Spirit of God and Christ is mentioned, *τὸ πνεῦμα* is put before, but never after the words *Θεός* and *Χεῖρς*: and the same observation will hold good in the case of the word *Κύριος*. For which reason these words are by some render'd, *from the Lord or the Spirit*, as being a much more natural, scriptural and grammatical construction, than either *the Spirit of the Lord*, as in our translation, or *the Lord the Spirit*, according to this author. See *Whitby in locum*.

† Page 380.

whole verse. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. According to this wondrous criticism of his, *he* that is sent by Christ, and proceeds from the Father, is the eternal Jehovah, the I am. Does the Father proceed from another in any sense?

HIS next proof is Heb. ix. 14. *Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God.* This author does know, or should know, that some of our best copies (together with the *Vulgate*) read *αἰῶν* [holy] instead of *αἰώνιος* [eternal]. See *Millii Examen*, &c. This takes away the very foundation of his argument. He knows likewise, that several considerable Expositors understand the words *eternal Spirit* of the Logos. But let it be understood of which you will, this cannot prove either the one or the other to be *that Supreme God to whom Christ offered himself without spot*. His imaginary triumphs therefore * over those whom he ignorantly calls *Arians*, are vain and childish.

HE says farther †, that omnipresence is ascribed to this person, *Psal. cxxxix. 7. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy face, or presence?* Does not he know, that this part of this curious psalm is a very beautiful and elegant description of the *omnipresence* of God? But a distinct person from God, signified by the word *Spirit*, has no place here. Why must that signify a distinct person, any more than *face* or *presence*? The plain meaning is, Where can I go, so as to be hid from thee, O Lord, the *omnipresent, all-discerning Mind*; or so as to escape thy notice and observation? — What is this now to his purpose?

OMNISCIENCE, we are next told ‡, is ascribed to him likewise. There needs no other answer to

* Page 381.

† Page 383.

‡ Page 388.

all that he says under this head, than that text, *John xvi. 13, 14, 15. When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: For he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* Is the Supreme God ever spoken of in such style and language as this? Our author is aware of this, and therefore * endeavours to obviate it, by shewing that the *Spirit's receiving knowledge* cannot be understood in the sense I speak of. And why? *Because this directly contradicts the Scripture elsewhere, which asserts, that what knowledge the Spirit hath, he hath it not by revelation from another.* And here we are turn'd to *Isa. xl. 13. Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord? or being his counsellor, hath taught him? &c. i. e.* he refers us to a text for a proof of the *Spirit's omniscience*, and consequently of his *supreme Deity*, which does not speak of the *Holy Ghost* at all. The language of this text in *Isaiab.* and of that in *Psal. cxxxix.* is exactly alike; both of them are beautiful descriptions of the nature and perfections of *God*, without the least hint at another person distinct from him.

HIS next proof † has some appearance of argument in it: And here I am willing to attend him, in order to fix the sense of a passage of Scripture, which may have some difficulty in it. The text he turns us to is *1 Cor. ii. 10. The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* This he mentions as a farther proof of the *omniscience* of the *Holy Ghost*. Here I have allowed there is some difficulty; for I hate a wrangling, contentious spirit.

* Page 390, 391.

† Page 397.

But still I imagine the sense of this text may be fix'd by a fair and rational interpretation, and yet not prove what he brings it for. The Apostle is plainly describing the greater excellency of the *Christian religion*, especially as it is founded in that great article, *a crucified Saviour*. And this he had endeavoured to recommend to the *Corinthians*, not by rhetorical flourishes, or fine speculations, but as a matter of divine evidence and revelation, *ver. 1.* This he calls (*ver. 7.*) *the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom*; a dispensation foretold indeed by the prophets, but not rightly understood even by the *Jews* themselves, and for many ages not discovered at all to the *Gentile* world; but now more clearly revealed to all, and proved to be the only method of recovery and happiness to true believers. Then he adds, *ver. 10.* *But God hath revealed these things to us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God: q. d.* These being matters above the reach of human reason, God has been pleased to reveal them to the world by his *Spirit*, or by *inspired men*, even by the predictions of the *Prophets* of old more darkly, and in part; now more clearly and expressly by us his *Apostles*, by the communication of that *Holy Spirit*, who knows and is acquainted with the whole purpose and design of God's revealed will. Thus it appears to be the design of the Apostle to shew, that the inspiration of God by his *Spirit* is the only effectual way of coming to the right knowledge of this important point. Here is nothing therefore of the *Spirit's own original knowledge*, that this author speaks of; for in the very beginning of this 10th verse it is said, that God had revealed these things to the *Apostles by his Spirit*. Here is a plain distinction observed, and the original *source* of this *revelation* discovered. And where is now his proof of the supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost from his *omniscience*, grounded on this text?

text? The objection therefore which he mentions still stands in its full force, and cannot be removed by referring us to a text that does not speak of the Holy Spirit at all, *viz.* *Isa.* xl. 13, 14.

HIS next head of argument for the proof of the supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost is, *the works performed by him.* The first text he mentions is *Gen.* i. 2. *And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* In answer, I will only refer him to what the learned and pious Bishop Patrick says upon these words: "Men (says he) have been extremely fanciful in their explication of these plain words. Some understanding by the Spirit of God, the sun, which gives spirit and life to all things upon earth; others the air, or the wind: when as yet there was no sun in the firmament, nor any wind that could stir without the power of the Almighty to excite it. This therefore we are to understand to be meant, *viz.* the infinite wisdom and power of God, which made a mighty commotion upon the face of the waters; *i. e.* upon that fluid matter before-mentioned, to separate the parts of it the one from the other."

There is not one of the texts he mentions from the Old Testament, which not only bears, but seems to require the same method of interpretation. The Spirit is not spoken of as a distinct personal agent; but according to the language of those countries, and the frequent style of the Old Testament, the power, the operation, the energy of the Supreme Being is, by a figure of speech, set forth under the elegant representation of a person. And in *Gen.* i. 2. (the text above quoted) the Spirit means not a person distinct from God, but the power of God himself; as may be certainly concluded from the consideration, that in the New Testament, wherein the distinct personality of the Holy Ghost is clearly set forth and taught, this Divine person is nowhere declared

declared to be an agent, either supreme or subordinate, in the creation of the world. For the evident and undoubted doctrine of the Gospel on this head is, that *God created all things by Jesus Christ*. *Josephus* understands the *Spirit* to be a *wind*: but if so, it must be a *miraculous*, not a *natural*, wind, as *Bishop Patrick* rightly observes.

THIS then being very often the case in the Old Testament, it must be (I am apt to think) the true method of interpreting the several texts this author has quoted from thence. If so, he argues *non ad idem*, and his texts are nothing to his purpose. — I know that a great many learned men (of no small note) have carried the same method of interpretation into the New Testament; and they have a great deal to say for themselves: but here I cannot bear them company.

As to the *miraculous operations*, &c. which he mentions * as a farther proof of the *supreme Deity* of the *Holy Ghost*, what he offers needs no other answer than what plainly arises from those known texts, *Heb. ii. 4. God also bearing them witness both with signs, and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his [God's] own will.* And also *1 Cor. xii. 6. It is the same God that worketh all in all.*

As to the head of *worship*, by which he farther attempts to prove the *supreme Deity* of the *Holy Ghost* †, since I am so grievously tired by following him in that long chace which he has led me, I will only give him in answer the words of another writer of his own side, but who maintains a much more charitable christian spirit towards those who differ from him, than this author can find in his heart to do; I mean *Dr. Watts*, whose words are these: “ I confess we cannot find in Scripture any
“ such positive or express precepts or examples of

* Page 402.

† Page 414.

" petition or praise addressed to the person of the
 " Holy Ghost, as there are to the Father and the
 " Son." *Pag.* 119, 120. He adds therefore (*p.* 132.)
 " Since we find so great a silence as to this matter
 " in Scripture, let us not bind it upon our own con-
 " sciences, nor upon others, as a piece of necessary
 " worship : — But since the most frequent patterns
 " and precepts in Scripture lead us to direct our
 " addresses to *God the Father*, who transacts all
 " his affairs with us in and thro' his *Son*, and by
 " his *Spirit*, I think we should also make it the
 " most frequent and usual practice in our devotions
 " to have our access thro' *Jesus Christ*, by one Spi-
 " rit, unto the Father ; *Ephes. ii. 18.*" — The
 Doctor indeed treads softly, and speaks warily.
 But if there be not one precept or pattern of direct
worship paid to the *Holy Ghost*, (as I am apt to
 think there is not) his argument ought to have car-
 ried him farther.

As to what this author confidently asserts*, that
 there are many instances in Scripture, wherein *supreme*
divine worship is paid to the *Holy Ghost*, as a distinct
Person from the *Father* and the *Son*; I shall stay till
 he produces them. — Again he says, *there are many*
instances, wherein the Deity, consider'd absolutely,
without any distinction of persons, is proposed as the
object of supreme divine worship, &c. I imagine, not
 one. — He mentions one instance† (which we may take
 as a specimen of all the other instances he has to pro-
 duce) viz. The beginning of the *Lord's Prayer*, *Our*
Father which art in heaven. — I was surprized to read
 what he there advances. *We are not to imagine* (says
 he) *that by the term FATHER in that directory, the*
first Person of the Trinity only is understood, exclusive
of the Son and Holy Ghost, &c. This is most extraordi-
 nary. It seems then, *the Father* does not denote *that*

Person, who is so call'd; but means something which is no *person* at all, a mere abstracted metaphysical notion; or else is all three *Persons* together. So that the *Father* signifies (it seems) not Him who is, but rather They who are *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Spirit* all together. Let him turn to the *Remarks* on the *four London ministers*, and see this sufficiently exposed, p. 24.

H^e tells us, *this must be carefully observed*. Verily I have observed it with care, even with astonishment; mind his reason now. *The first Person of the Trinity is not denominated Father, because of the relation he bears to the Holy Ghost, or because of the relation he stands in to the creatures; but only because of the relation he bears to the Son.* It seems then, he is not to be considered as a *Father* to us creatures, to us men, even when our blessed Lord himself directs us to address him as *our Father in heaven*. Let him remember, this is the Passage he has under consideration. What has this to do with his relation to Christ only as his *Father*? Our blessed Lord is teaching his disciples to pray: But they must not consider *God* as *their Father in heaven*, when their great Master directs them to call him so. This is special Divinity again.—But after all, this is no trifling matter. I am sorry the man should thus expose himself: But exposing *himself* is not worth talking of. I am sorry that he should expose the sacred writings, by confounding all language, and rendering those Scriptures quite absurd and unintelligible, which were intended as a rule of faith and practice to the lowest and most unlearned part of mankind: Rendering them so (I say) by fixing a forced, and unnatural, and perverse interpretation upon plain things in defiance to common sense. This, I say, is no trifling matter. How must the enemies of revelation triumph in such a conduct as this! “What (says the forementioned author) will such men make the Bible signify at last this way,
“ when

“ when no plain Christian, no man shall know what
 “ God, and Father, and Christ stand for? This is
 “ making christianity a sport of words, and must give
 “ the enemies of the christian revelation occasion to
 “ say, What use can such a *book* be of? Or what
 “ likelihood that it is from God? p. 25.” To what
 end, to what purpose is all this, but to support a mere
 human and fictitious hypothesis, that has no founda-
 tion either in Scripture or reason? How far this will
 appear to this author, I cannot tell. But I flatter my
 self it will appear to impartial readers, from what has
 been offered. With such I cheerfully trust the debate
 betwixt us.

I SHALL now leave the whole with this author, and
 with all serious and considerate persons, in the words
 of Dr. Clarke, in his Introduction to *the Scripture-
 Doctrine of the Trinity*, p. 30. “ With respect to scho-
 “ lastick enquiries concerning *metaphysical nature,*
 “ *substance,* &c. it had been well if these had never
 “ been meddled with. But that which is properly
 “ *theological in the Doctrine of the Trinity*, viz. the
 “ distinct powers and offices of the Father, the Son,
 “ and the Holy Spirit, in the creation, government,
 “ redemption, sanctification and salvation of man; and
 “ the proper respective honour due consequently from
 “ us to each of them distinctly (that we may not wor-
 “ ship we know not *how*, nor *what*) this is the great
 “ foundation, and the main oeconomy of the christian
 “ religion: the doctrine, into which we were bap-
 “ tized, and which every sincere Christian ought, ac-
 “ cording to the best of his ability, and the means
 “ he has of informing himself, to endeavour thoroughly
 “ to understand. The *absolute and incommunicable*
 “ *supremacy of God the Father over all*, and our re-
 “ conciliation and subjection to him, as such our Su-
 “ premo Governor; the redemption purchased by the
 “ Son; and the sanctification worked in us by the
 “ Holy Spirit; are the three great articles of our
 “ Creed,

“ Creed. And in maintaining these rightly, so as
 “ seriously to affect mens understandings, and influ-
 “ ence their lives accordingly, is the *honour of God,*
 “ and the interest of *true religion* concerned.”—And
 a little farther on, “ The same *pious disposition* of
 “ *mind*, which makes serious persons careful not to
 “ diminish the honour of the *Son of God*, and of his
 “ *Holy Spirit*, ought certainly to render them at least
 “ as solicitous, not to diminish the *singular and su-*
 “ *preme honour* of *God the Father* himself, of whose
 “ alone grace and mercy it is, that his *Son* was given
 “ for their *redemption*, and his *Spirit* for their *sancti-*
 “ *fication*.”

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